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1976



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PREFACE

BLINDNESS 1976 is the twelfth issue of an annual published by the American Association of Workers for the Blind. It is designed to provide a forum for important and timely articles, treated in depth, in our own field and in related fields. Experts in the many categories of work with blind persons are commissioned to conduct the essential research and prepare the articles so that their continuing value will be assured. BLINDNESS should reflect the movement of human thought in respect to blindness and stimulate original thinking and excellence of practice in the field.

In accord with the above objective, BLINDNESS was originally intended to include some of the significant papers presented at the AAWB conventions. This issue of BLINDNESS has included a paper presented at a regional convention. The Publications Committee will continue this practice.

Copies of BLINDNESS 1976 are distributed to members of the Association as a function of membership. The Library of Congress, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, will make the annual available through regional libraries in both braille and recorded form.

BLINDNESS 1976

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INTRODUCTION

The Publications Advisory Committee of AAWB attempts to produce each year an issue of the Blindness annual which reflects the current state of the art in regard to an issue of importance to AAWB members and to all who are interested in services for visually impaired persons. The 1976 annual focuses on the representation of the ideas of visually impaired persons in the decision making processes of service providers.

The importance of this topic in the area of visual impairment at the present time is not unique but is a manifestation of a widespread concern throughout our society. Our current concerns for advocacy and for consumer representation have historical roots and have received a major impetus since the 1960's. The concept of people being represented in the decisions that affect their lives is central in a democracy and, if done properly, should result in a higher quality of services.

In an attempt to generate the broadest possible discussion of this topic, the Publications Advisory Committee solicited articles on this topic from diverse sources. These included representatives of both private and public agencies, representatives of organized consumer organizations, including the National Federation for the Blind and the American Council for the Blind, and visually impaired individuals who were not associated with either service agencies or membership organizations concerned with visual impairment.

It is the hope of the Committee that the resulting yield of articles will communicate a good understanding of the current issues associated with this topic and will suggest future directions for the field of services for visually impaired persons.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Supplemental Security Income
for the Blind 1

PATRICIA J. LIVERS, Director Bureau
of Supplemental Security Income
Social Security Administration

When There are so Many, Why
Do We Serve So Few? 19

FRIEDERICKA MAYERS, Ph.D., A.C.S.W.
Illinois Visually Handicapped
Institute. This paper was given
at the 1976 AAWB Midwestern
Regional Conference

The Sheltered Workshop for the
Blind as a Provider of
Alternate Life Styles 33

HERBERT RUSALEM, Ed.D.
Teachers College
Columbia University

and HAROLD RICHTERMAN, Director
Rehabilitation Services Division
National Industries for the Blind

Blueprint for Future Development
in Canada 45

PAUL C. O'NEILL, Director of Public
Relations, The Canadian National
Institute for the Blind

The Blind Person's Impact on
Private Agencies for the
Blind 53

WILLIAM F. GALLAGHER, Director,
Program Planning Department,
American Foundation for the Blind,
Inc.

Citizen Consumer Participation 63

REESE ROBRAHN, Director of Research
and Governmental Affairs, American
Council of the Blind, Inc.

The Changer and the Changed 71

CHARLES E. HALLENBECK, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
University of Kansas

Challenges to the Consumer's
Role in Federal Legislation 81

JOHN DUNCAN, Specialist in
Governmental Relations, American
Foundation for the Blind

The Best of the Past for the
Present: Number Eleven of a
Series of Reprints 91

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Excerpts from "John Metcalf:
'Blind Jack' of Knaresborough" | A narrative included in
<u>Heroes of the Darkness</u> by
J. B. MANNIX. A collection
of life stories of well-
known blind people. 1911 |
| 2. Excerpts from the article
"Blind" | SIR FRANCIS CAMPBELL in
Encyclopedia Britannica,
9th ed., Vol. III |

Blindness 1964-1974/75: Cumulative Author
and Title Index 125



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SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME FOR THE BLIND

By

Patricia J. Livers

The Social Security Act provides for two major types of payments to the blind. Both are administered by the Social Security Administration: (1) Social security monthly disability benefits, financed from payroll contributions, are paid to 120,000 blind persons and 55,000 of their dependents. (2) Supplemental security income (SSI) payments, financed from general revenues of the U.S. Treasury, are made to 76,000 blind people each month. This article will explain the development and operation of the SSI program and how it helps blind persons.

Legislative Background

The supplemental security income (SSI) program for the needy aged, blind, and disabled was established under the Social Security Amendments of 1972, Public Law 92-603, and went into effect January 1974. This new Federal program (title XVI of the Social Security Act), in combination with State supplementary benefit programs, replaced the three former State or locally-administered programs of public assistance for the aged, blind, and disabled: Old Act Assistance (OAA), Aid to the Blind (AB), and Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled (APTD), contained in titles I, X, and XIV of the Act. It also replaced the former title XVI which allowed states to combine all assistance programs for the aged, blind, and disabled into one.

SSI legislation sought to improve the assistance programs for the aged, blind, and disabled, and incorporated some specific advantages:

Editor's Note: This article includes recent changes in the SSI program, enacted by the 94th Congress in late 1976. (These changes did not apply to Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.)

Uniform national eligibility standards.--One set of nationally uniform standards replaced the multiple eligibility requirements of the Federal-State welfare programs for the aged, blind, and disabled, administered by State and local agencies.

Uniform minimum income level.--The basic Federal SSI benefit provides a floor of minimum income upon which each State can build as need requires and resources permit. Before the introduction of SSI, benefit amounts for the blind varied widely from State to State.

Dignity for recipients.--SSI provides financial assistance while preserving personal dignity by elimination of lien laws and relatives' responsibility.

Work incentives.--SSI offers earnings disregards as an incentive for work.

More efficiency and economy.--The Social Security Administration (SSA), with its nationwide network of public contact offices and its large-scale data processing and record keeping operation, is better equipped than States to handle the huge SSI work loads and at less cost to the taxpayers.

Fiscal relief for most states.--With the Federal government assuming the lion's share of costs and workloads connected with cash payments to the aged, blind, and disabled, most States can concentrate on improving social, medical, and rehabilitative services.

Improved coordination.--About 53 percent of all SSI recipients also get monthly social security benefits. Since SSA administers both SSI and social security payments, coordination between the two programs is easier.

The SSI program reflects the general agreement in this country on the desirability of a three-level approach to income security. The first level of protection is social security--a universally available system of publicly administered retirement, survivors, and disability insurance, contributory in nature and wage related.

The second level consists of savings, private retirement systems, and other benefit programs which grow out of one's employment. And the third level of protection is a public program of assistance for those who, taking all income into account, still do not have income sufficient to meet their minimum needs.

Much discussion preceded the Congressional decision on the title of the new program. The title decided on--supplemental security income--makes explicit the fact that these payments will, in most cases, supplement social security benefits or other income.

The SSI program is part of a comprehensive strategy for helping the aged, blind, and disabled in partnership with the states. The intent is to allocate to each level of government--Federal and State--those functions it is best able to perform. The Federal government determines eligibility and payment amounts, and arranges for the distribution of checks; the State government concentrates on medical and social services and meeting other needs.

Who is eligible for SSI?

Monthly SSI checks are paid to people in financial need who are 65 or older and to people in need at any age--even the very young--who are blind or disabled. "Blindness" is defined as vision no better than 20/200 even with glasses or tunnel vision (limited visual field of 20 degrees or less). A person is considered "disabled" if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which prevents the individual from doing any substantial work and which is expected to last at least 12 months or result in death.

About 4.3 million people are now receiving SSI checks. This compares with about 3 million under the previous three assistance programs. Social Security continues outreach efforts to locate and inform people potentially eligible for SSI.

Eligibility Factors

The amount of resources and income determines whether an individual or couple can qualify for SSI.

1. Resources - A single person can have resources worth up to \$1,500 and still get SSI checks. The amount for an eligible couple is \$2,250. Resources include savings accounts, stocks, bonds, jewelry, and other valuables which could be converted into cash. Not everything, however, counts as a resource. A home for example, doesn't count. And the Federal Government does not require liens on the homes of people who get SSI.

A car which has a retail value of \$1,200 or less or which is used for transportation to a job or to a place for regular treatment of a specific medical problem is disregarded. Personal effects or household goods do not count as resources in most cases; nor do life insurance policies with a total face value of \$1,500 or less per person.

If a person's countable resources exceed the \$1,500 limit (\$2,250 for a couple) by a small amount, he or she may still qualify for SSI if the excess assets are disposed

of within a specified time. This helps the person who owns property which is providing little or no income but which cannot be sold quickly at a fair price. Time limits for disposal are 6 months for real property and 3 months for personal property.

2. Income - An individual is eligible for SSI if total countable income is less than \$167.80 a month; or an eligible couple, with countable income of less than \$251.80 a month. If both members of a couple are eligible and have been separated for over 6 months, each person is treated as an individual.

The following income is disregarded in determining the amount of countable income:

The first \$20 of unearned income such as social security benefits, annuities, rent, interest, etc. (but not income based on need) each month;

An additional \$65 or earned income (wages and/or net earnings from self-employment) a month, plus one-half of the earned income over \$65 (or over \$85 if there is no unearned income);

Refund of taxes paid on real property or on food purchases;

Regular cash payments by a State or local political subdivision which are based on need;

Tuition and fees paid by grants, scholarships, and fellowships;

Home-grown produce consumed by the individual and family;

Irregular or infrequent earned income if it totals no more than \$30 in a calendar quarter;

Irregular or infrequent unearned income if it totals no more than \$60 a quarter;

Foster care payments for a child who is not receiving SSI but who has been placed in the recipient's household by an approved agency;

One-third of child support payments received by an eligible child from an absent parent;

Earnings (up to \$1,200 a quarter, but not more than \$1,620 a year) of an unmarried student under 22;

Income necessary for fulfillment of an approved plan to achieve self-support established for a blind or disabled person;

Work expenses of an eligible person who is blind.

Income to Achieve Self-Support Excluded

Income (earned or unearned) needed by a blind or disabled SSI recipient to fulfill a plan for self-support does not count as "income" against benefits. This exclusion does not apply to a person 65 or older unless he or she was receiving SSI or State disability or blind payments for the month before 65.

The plan must be an approved one which includes such things as: specific savings goals and/or planned use of funds for designated objectives; period of time for achieving goals; and identification and segregation of money and goods being accumulated and conserved.

This exclusion applies to any income from any source. There is no limit as to amounts which may be accumulated and conserved; but it can't exceed the amount of income remaining to the individual after application of all other income exclusions. The exclusion applies only to the income of the specific individual whose plan is approved.

Through a self-support plan, many blind persons who otherwise might not qualify for SSI can receive benefits for 18 to 36 months (or even 48 months where education is involved). Thus they can establish or reestablish themselves among the working population of our country.

How to Figure Work Expense Disregard

An individual eligible for SSI because of blindness and working may deduct ordinary and necessary expenses attributable to earning of income. If he or she has a blind spouse also eligible for SSI, both can deduct work expenses. There is no specific ceiling on the amount of the deduction, but it must be reasonable and not exceed the amount of earnings the blind person has from working in the quarter involved. Expenses are deductible as paid.

This work expense deduction does not apply to a blind individual 65 or older, unless he or she was receiving SSI payments because of blindness before 65 (or received payments under a former State plan for aid to the blind). Any unused portions of the exclusion for one quarter can't be carried over for use in a later quarter. Blind persons may wish to arrange their payments for large-scale expenses in a way to benefit as much as possible from the exclusions.

Three types of ordinary and necessary work expenses are deductible for the blind:

1. Transportation to and from work. This includes bus or cab fare, travel in a private auto (at 15¢ a mile), and certain other costs.
2. Job performance expenses, such as child care costs, special equipment needed on the job, licenses, lunches, safety shoes, and tools. These also include such things as optical aids, translation of materials into braille, uniforms and their care, wheelchairs, prostheses, and union dues. Federal, State, and local income taxes are deductible, as are social security contributions.
3. Job improvement expenses, such as for stenotype instruction for a blind typist, key punch training, a computer program training course, and other courses.

Expenses of food, shelter, self-care items, insurance, and other day-to-day expenses not related directly to work can't be deducted.

How much are the SSI payments?

The maximum Federal SSI payment (effective July 1976) is \$167.80 a month for an individual and \$251.80 for an eligible couple. These amounts assure a basic floor of income for the aged, blind, and disabled. Some people may get less than the full SSI amount because of other income. Others may get more if they live in a State that adds a supplement to the Federal payment. Checks generally are paid on the first day of each month.

The two main factors which determine Federal SSI benefit amounts are living arrangements and other income:

1. Living arrangements - A person or couple who lives in another person's household and receives support and maintenance in kind from that person has his/her SSI benefit reduced by one-third. This is a statutory provision in lieu of including such support/maintenance as unearned income and having it deducted from the full SSI amount.

In most cases, residents of public institutions can't get SSI. But payments can be made to persons in publicly operated community residences (such as group homes for the mentally retarded) serving no more than 16 people.

People in public or private hospitals and other health facilities where Medicaid pays over half of their expenses

can get up to \$25 a month from SSI. The amount is up to \$50 for a couple if both are institutionalized.

If only one member of a couple is in an institution, incomes of each are considered separately. Before October 1976, any income of either spouse was applied to reduce the combined SSI benefit of the couple. People living in certain charitable homes may be eligible for up to the full amount of the SSI benefit.

2. Income - After the first \$20 of unearned income (unless the income is considered to be based on need) and the first \$65 of earned income are disregarded (or \$85 of earned income where there is none unearned), the SSI payment is reduced: \$1.00 for each \$1.00 of unearned income (such as social security) and by \$1.00 for every \$2.00 of earned income (such as wages).

Take, for example, a person who gets \$100 a month from social security and \$100 a month from odd jobs. His maximum SSI benefit of \$167.80 would be reduced by \$80 because of the social security benefit, and further reduced another \$17.50 (\$1.00 for every \$2.00) for the earned income. He would be eligible for \$70.30 a month SSI.

There are other factors which might affect the amount of a person's SSI check, but these are the principal ones.

Federal SSI checks are increased automatically to keep pace with the rising cost of living. The latest increase was 6.4 percent in July 1976. Following are the changes in the SSI payment rate for individuals and couples living independently:

Date	Individual	Couple
Before start of SSI program*	\$130.00	\$195.00
1/1/74	140.00	210.00
7/1/74	146.00	219.00
7/1/75	157.70	236.60
7/1/76	167.80	251.80

* These amounts were part of the original SSI legislation. However, they were raised to \$140 and \$210 the day before the program began on January 1, 1974.

State Supplementary Payments

There are two types of additional payments that may be made by the State to SSI recipients:

1. Mandatory supplement - All States (except Texas) are required to add to the SSI payments for recipients who got an amount greater than SSI under former State programs. This provision was put into the law to protect former recipients against any reduction of income as a result of the changeover to SSI in January 1974.
2. Optional State supplement - Most States add this to the SSI benefits for new applicants. If a State chooses, the Federal government will administer the optional supplement, pay the administrative costs, and guarantee the State against any increase over its 1972 expenditures for assistance payments to aged, blind, and disabled people.

OPTIONAL STATE SUPPLEMENTATION PAYMENTS TO THE BLIND WITH NO COUNTABLE INCOME AND NO SPECIAL NEEDS, AND LIVING INDEPENDENTLY. THESE AMOUNTS SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE FEDERAL MAXIMUM LEVEL OF \$167.80 FOR AN INDIVIDUAL AND \$251.80 FOR A COUPLE.*

	<u>INDIVIDUAL</u>	<u>COUPLES</u>
Alabama	None	None
Alaska	\$102.20	\$153.20
Arizona	None	None
Arkansas	None	None
California	\$145.20	\$374.20
Colorado	\$ 17.20	\$118.20
Connecticut	\$ 88.20	\$ 60.20
Delaware	None	None
District of Columbia	None	None
Florida	None	None
Georgia	None	None
Hawaii	\$ 15.20	\$ 24.20
Idaho	\$ 63.20	\$ 50.20
Illinois	\$ 7.20	None
Indiana	None	None
Iowa	\$ 22.00	\$ 44.00
Kansas	None	None
Kentucky	None	None
Louisiana	None	None
Maine	\$ 10.00	\$ 15.00
Maryland	None	None
Massachusetts	\$138.79	\$361.38
Michigan	\$ 24.30	\$ 36.40
Minnesota	\$ 28.20	\$ 37.20

Table Continued

Mississippi	None	None
Missouri	None	None
Montana	None	None
Nebraska	\$ 65.20	\$ 74.20
Nevada	\$ 97.20	\$278.20
New Hampshire	\$ 2.20	None
New Jersey	\$ 22.20	\$ 10.20
New Mexico	None	None
New York	\$ 60.85	\$ 75.94
North Carolina	None	None
North Dakota	None	None
Ohio	None	None
Oklahoma	\$ 21.90	\$ 48.80
Oregon	\$ 37.05	\$ 41.22
Pennsylvania	\$ 32.40	\$ 48.70
Rhode Island	\$ 31.44	\$ 59.32
South Carolina	None	None
South Dakota	None	None
Tennessee	None	None
Texas	None	None
Utah	None	None
Vermont	\$ 32.20	\$ 43.20 - \$ 63.20**
Virginia	None	None
Washington	\$ 17.85 - \$ 34.10**	\$ 6.05 - \$ 36.00**
West Virginia	None	None
Wisconsin	\$ 66.20	\$ 99.20

* There are also a range of other State supplementary payments given to blind SSI recipients in various living arrangements other than living independently.

** Amounts vary according to geographic location within State. In most States, a person who is eligible for SSI is also eligible for Medicaid and social services provided by the State.

Federal Housing Subsidies Exempted

Effective October 1, 1976, most federal housing subsidies are not considered either a resource or income for SSI recipients. This

includes so-called "section 8" rent subsidies (where the local housing authority pays the subsidy directly to the private landlord). Persons getting SSI (or their representatives) whose benefits were reduced or stopped, or those who were denied eligibility, because a subsidy was counted as income or a resource under the old law may now be eligible for reinstatement or qualify for higher SSI benefits.

Medicaid and Food Stamps

In most States, SSI recipients may be eligible for medical services under Medicaid (title XIX of the Social Security Act). A person who receives SSI should also receive a Medicaid identity card from his or her State or local welfare office.

In 27 States and the District of Columbia, the Social Security Administration makes determinations of Medicaid eligibility for the States. In these States, all SSI recipients and State supplementary benefit recipients are eligible for Medicaid. States which chose to make their own Medicaid determinations have the option to exclude SSI recipients who would not have been eligible for cash assistance under the old programs prior to January 1974.

SSI recipients in 48 States and the District of Columbia are currently eligible automatically for food stamps. In California and Massachusetts, the equivalent bonus value of food stamps is paid in cash to the recipients. Food stamps are given through State and local welfare offices.

Applying for SSI Benefits

There are about 1,300 full-time social security offices where a person can apply for SSI benefits. Representatives from these offices visit 3,400 other outlying communities periodically.

While it is best to apply for SSI in person, health or transportation problems may prevent this. An application will be mailed out when a person calls or writes the social security office.

The people in the social security office take applications for SSI and request evidence as to identity, age, resources, income, and any other factors necessary to establish eligibility. They make eligibility determinations for people 65 and over.

For people who are blind or disabled, social security personnel are responsible for making determinations only on non-medical factors. After such a claim is developed by social security, it is sent to a State agency (usually the vocational rehabilitation agency) so a medical decision can be made. If the person is currently receiving social security disability benefits, an SSI payment can be

approved without referral to the State for a further medical review. This is because the medical criteria under the two programs are the same.

Claims Processing Time

The time it takes to process an SSI claim depends on the case. An aged claim, for example, may be paid in 4 to 6 weeks. Disability and blindness cases take longer because it is necessary to get medical reports and evaluate them. Unless the applicant is already receiving social security disability benefits, the process generally takes about 2 to 3 months.

If a person applying for SSI on the basis of blindness or disability is otherwise eligible and is found presumptively blind or disabled, payments can be made for up to 3 months while a medical determination is being made. If it is finally determined the person is not blind or disabled, these payments will not be considered an overpayment. (Before December 1976, this provision did not include the blind.)

A person filing an initial SSI application who has a financial emergency may receive an advance payment of up to \$100 if it's likely he or she will be found eligible. This will later be deducted from the first SSI check.

Also, 25 States and the District of Columbia have an "interim assistance" program to help especially needy applicants meet basic needs while waiting for a decision on an SSI claim. This interim payment from the State generally must be paid back by the applicant.

Referrals to Other Agencies

The social security office refers all blind and disabled persons for possible vocational rehabilitation services to determine if there is a potential for improvement in their condition or if the possibility of self-support exists. These applicants may not qualify for SSI if they are offered rehabilitation services and refuse to accept them, without good cause.

If the vocational rehabilitation agency is able to develop a specific plan for achieving self-support which meets certain SSA criteria, the referred individual may, under this plan, be able to exclude income or accumulated resources which would otherwise disqualify him or her for SSI.

Blind or disabled children under 16 are referred to the agency administering the State plan for crippled children's services

(or other designated agency). The State plan for services has to provide, among other things, for coordination with other agencies serving blind or disabled children.

SSI claimants are required to apply for other benefits for which they may be eligible. These benefits include but are not limited to:

Social security retirement, disability, or survivors insurance;
Worker's compensation;
Railroad retirement annuities and pensions;
Veteran's compensation and pensions;
Unemployment compensation;
Union pensions; and
Civil service annuities.

The social security representatives help applicants to obtain any of these benefits for which they may be eligible. Adjudication of the SSI benefit is not delayed due to potential eligibility for other benefits.

SSI Appeal Rights

If a written SSI application is denied or if an existing benefit is reduced or stopped, an individual has certain appeal rights. He or she also has the right to be represented by a lawyer, an organization, a friend, or other person. The appeal steps are:

Reconsideration - A reconsideration is usually the first step in the appeals process. The request for reconsideration must be made within 60 days from the date the individual receives the unfavorable notice.

A complete review of all facts in the case will be made by someone in the social security office who did not take part in the original decision. The person and/or representative has the right to personally present the reasons for disagreement to the social security reviewer.

If a decision in dispute is based on medical evidence, the reconsideration will be made by a State agency. A written notice of that decision will be mailed to the recipient or claimant. (Note: If a person already getting SSI gets a notice that checks will be reduced or stopped, the checks may be continued in the same amount during the reconsideration if the request for reconsideration is filed within 10 days of receiving the notice, rather than 60 days. If the original decision is upheld upon reconsideration, SSI benefits made during the time the reconsideration is pending may have to be repaid.)

Hearing - A person who disagrees with a determination that he is no longer disabled or blind or with a reconsidered decision may ask for a further independent review by an administrative law judge or hearing examiner. This request must be made within 60 days from the date of receipt of the notice of determination or decision.

Appeals Council Review - In this step, the individual asks the Appeals Council to review an unfavorable decision by the administrative law judge or hearing examiner. The request must be filed within 60 days from the date of receipt of the hearing decision.

Court Action - If the person is still dissatisfied with the outcome, he or she can file a complaint in a United States district court within 60 days of the date of the notice of the Appeals Council's decision.

The number of people who have appealed adverse decisions on their SSI claims has risen over the past year or so. For example, there were over 52,000 requests for hearings in fiscal year 1975 and slightly over 60,000 requests in fiscal 1976.

An individual has the right to ask about anything that happens or doesn't happen to his SSI application or payment and to appeal any unsatisfactory decision.

SSI in Action

To gain an idea of how SSI works, taking into consideration the information covered earlier, it may be helpful to give a theoretical example. Let's take the case of Joe M., age 23, who is blind and lives alone in a rented room. For the past year or so he has worked as an assembler 5 hours a day at a minimum wage and grosses about \$200 a month.

A member of the American Association of Workers for the Blind, Inc. tells Joe he should consider looking into the possibility of getting either social security or SSI benefits. Joe is a little skeptical of qualifying, particularly since he is so young, but decides it's worth a try. He takes his birth certificate, social security card, and a record of income and assets and visits the social security office.

Since Joe is legally blind, he meets the medical criteria under both programs. And since he needs only 1 1/2 years of work credits to be fully insured for social security disability benefits at his age, he becomes eligible for these checks. He qualified for \$115 a month. He will not lose any of his social security benefits

due to his earnings because his \$2,400 annual earnings are below the exempt amount for this program.

Joe finds he also is eligible for a \$49.00 SSI payment to supplement his social security benefit and bring him up to a minimum standard of income. He owns no car or home and has few other assets so his resources are easily under the \$1,500 limit. The biggest question that arose with his SSI claim was whether his total income was too high to qualify. In addition to Joe's \$200 monthly wages, he receives about \$50 every 3 months for a sister and picks up a few dollars now and then selling produce from his small garden.

		Countable Income
A.	<u>Income not from current work:</u>	
	Monthly social security benefits . . . \$115.00	
	Less \$20 disregard -20.00	
		\$ 95.00
		\$95.00
B.	<u>Income from work ("earned income"):</u>	
	Wages for the month \$200.00	
	Less \$65 disregard -65.00	
		135.00
	Less \$1 for each \$2 earned over \$65 . -67.50	
		67.50
	Less blind work expenses -43.70	
		23.80
		23.80
	(as shown below)	
	Social security taxes** - \$11.70	
	Busfare - 12.00	
	Lunch money - 20.00	
		\$43.70
	** Income not high enough to also pay income taxes.	
	Total countable income to be subtracted from	
	maximum SSI payment possible	
		\$118.80

Joe's total monthly income:

A.	<u>SSI payment</u> - Maximum SSI payment for	
	Individual \$167.80	
	Less countable income -118.80	
	SSI amount payable \$ 49.00	49.00
B.	<u>Social security benefit</u> 115.00	115.00
C.	<u>Work income</u> 200.00	200.00
	Joe's total monthly income	\$364.00

As long as Joe receives no more than \$60 in a calendar quarter from his sister, this infrequent income will not affect his SSI check. Any home-grown produce he consumes is not considered nor is any that he sells if it's not more than \$30 a quarter.

Joe also qualifies for Medicaid and food stamps. This, along with his total monthly cash income of \$364.00 enables him to live in modest comfort.

The example of how Joe's SSI payment was determined was done on a monthly basis for ease of understanding. Actually payment amounts are computed on a quarterly basis under the law.

Administrative Difficulties

Like each major new program the Social Security Administration has administered, there were a number of initial start-up difficulties. It can be expected that any program involving the efforts of government at all levels and of many private organizations and individuals requires a great deal of skill and coordination.

Former HEW Secretary Caspar Weinberger described the SSI program as "the most significant Federal civilian program since the introduction of Medicare in 1966, and one of the largest scale efforts in civilian history." From a public administration viewpoint, the task was more difficult than Medicare. The State programs of assistance to the aged, blind, and disabled were ongoing. As of the date of implementation, SSI was off and running with no start-up or phase-in period. In addition, because this was a program for needy people, who lived a day-to-day or month-to-month existence, there could be no delays in providing assistance.

In the 14 months between enactment of the SSI law and implementation, SSA had to accomplish the following:

Transfer 3 million aged, blind, or disabled recipients from 1,350 State and local administrative units, each with separate information and accounting systems.

Develop and install a highly complex communication and computer system to give 1,300 local social security offices direct and immediate access to the master computers in Baltimore.

Develop an equally complex payment system, through which local SSA offices would control and maintain the entire payment mechanism.

Negotiate agreements with the 50 States and the District of Columbia on the supplementation programs and on other aspects of SSI implementation.

Hire and train 15,000 field employees in the new and existing programs. Open new field offices and expand or relocate others.

Translate the law and intent of Congress into policies, regulations and procedures.

In the midst of preparation, two major pieces of legislation were passed which substantially affected the program and had the effect, in many instances, of nullifying preparatory efforts that had already been made. The first included a mandatory State supplement for transferred beneficiaries to maintain their benefits at previous levels; this required system redesign and revision of policies and procedures already established. The second amendment (signed into law the day before SSI began) provided a \$10 benefit increase and required the reexamination of 273,000 disability cases.

What began as a fairly simple program had become a complex administrative task which required close and continued cooperation with the States. The transitional period was extended when the problems SSA experienced were greater than anticipated.

The belated gratifying of the mandatory and optional State supplements was, perhaps, one of the greatest complications SSA faced. It involved adoption of a vast number of State variables onto the Federal system.

Overpayments became a major problem. Some were due to errors in the data entered into the SSA computers, including inaccurate data transferred from State to Federal records during the conversion period. Others arose from the fact that it was impossible to design a fully automated system in the time frame allowed and with the unexpected interim legislative changes.

Many of the one-time problems have been resolved and SSA is working hard to correct remaining deficiencies. As with the disability and Medicare programs, significant inroads are being made in this post-shake down period toward program simplification and greater efficiency. Special studies are being conducted and remedial legislation is being considered to bring about further improvements.

Despite the problems of overpayment and other serious transitional systems and staffing problems SSA faced in putting SSI into place, the fact remains that about \$500 million a month is getting into the hands of 4.3 million of our neediest aged, blind, and disabled people. This is over a million more people and over \$200 million more a month than was paid out under the State-Federal categorical assistance programs prior to January 1974.

How You Can Help

Professional people who work with the blind can be of great service by telling their clients about supplemental security income payments (and also about social security disability benefits) and by encouraging them to visit their nearest social security office. The people there have free leaflets that explain the program and they will be glad to answer any questions that are asked.

In addition, the Social Security Administration has produced photograph recordings of four of its publications, including "supplemental security income for the aged, blind, and disabled." The others are "Your social security," "Disability benefits for blind people," and "Your Medicare Handbook." These records are available at any Library of Congress regional library.

WHEN THERE ARE SO MANY, WHY DO

WE SERVE SO FEW?

By

Friedericka Mayers

More than 50% of the legally blind are over 65, yet less than 8% of blind services are directed to meet the needs of this age group (Proceedings, 1972). Agencies serving visually handicapped adults of all ages give a disproportionate amount of staff time and effort to the young and employable (Scott). Yet the greater need for services among the elderly has been repeatedly documented. Services to the aged blind in nursing homes through in-service training of nursing home staff have revealed that one of every six residents is legally blind and one-fourth of these became blind long before they went into the nursing home (Rusalem). Although only 5% of the sighted elderly ever go into nursing homes, a higher percentage, estimated at 20% of the severely visually impaired are institutionalized (Proceedings, 1972). Adequate blind services to the elderly in the community would prevent this unnecessary institutionalization.

The largest proportion of the elderly blind, however, are not known to the blind-serving agencies. They constitute the "hidden blind" in the community. The elderly blind who do find their way to an agency tend to remain on the caseload interminably instead of being integrated into agencies serving the sighted elderly, to make way for the newly blinded. It has been estimated that the annual increment of the newly blinded is at least 10% of the blind population (Hellinger). But the rate is much higher in every major category of blindness for those over 65. The rate for cataracts is about 16 times as great in the elderly, glaucoma about 18 times, vascular disease 21 times, retinal degeneration 22 times, and senile degeneration 63 times that of persons under 65 (Proceedings, 1968).

How then can agencies search out into the community and find these newly-blinded Seniors, give them immediate, appropriate, crisis-oriented services, and help them learn about and take advantage of mainstream services they are entitled to? This article will examine alternative solutions to four of the major obstacles to providing adequate services to the elderly blind. These solutions are recruitment, staffing, goal-setting, and funding.

In connection with these four solutions the following issues will be discussed. To find the elderly blind who are in need of

services, it is necessary to develop a flexible approach, emphasizing prevention and remediation rather than blindness. To overcome negative staff attitudes toward the aged in blind-serving agencies, it is necessary to develop in-service training to decrease fear of aging and enlarge understanding and empathy with the aged. When staff shortages are more the problem than negative attitudes, it is necessary to differentiate four alternative staffing patterns to provide the most appropriate and efficient use of different levels of professional and nonprofessional training.

Careful attention to goal-setting, or management by objectives (MBO) is necessary to ensure the most economical use of agency resources in serving the elderly. In program development for the over-65 segment of an agency's population, it is necessary to focus on the goals of finding new clients, identifying new needs, and making new team relationships with other agencies serving the sighted elderly. The problem of funding such programs necessitates a cost-benefit analysis of the return from staff time devoted to grantsmanship. It is also necessary to consider the impact on blind services of the possible decrease in funds available to the aged due to increased funding through general revenue sharing instead of through the Older Americans Act. Keeping abreast of developments in health care and other legislation is necessary to determine new sources of funding. Political action in coalition with other groups concerned with funding of services to the elderly is necessary to prevent the continual erosion of these services.

None of these issues can be resolved separately. In trying to expand and improve services to visually impaired persons over 65, a vicious circle of obstacles exists. Although wanting to serve more elderly persons, the agency hesitates to go out into the community looking for them without first having enough transportation available to bring them to the agency, enough staff to serve them, and programs to offer them. Yet transportation, staff, and programs can't be obtained without funds, or the allocation of more of the agency's resources to serving the elderly. And more funds or allocation of staff time to Senior programs can't be obtained without finding more Seniors who need and want services. The first solution is therefore recruitment. Getting out into the community and seeing how many elderly have visual problems and how much unmet need there is for blind services in this age group inspires commitment to overcome all the other obstacles.

Recruitment: I prefer the word recruitment, which means "enlisting new members," to the word casefinding, which has the connotation that being elderly and having limited visual acuity makes one a "case," or as Webster puts it, "a person in whom a disease occurs." Older persons do not think of themselves as "case," and do not want to be labeled or treated as such. This is why they contribute such a large proportion to the "hidden blind." They do

not think of themselves as blind or visually handicapped. They are just old and so it is only natural that, sometimes ever so gradually, they have been losing a lot of sight. It never occurs to them to seek out services for what is just one more of the many vital losses they have suffered due to the aging process.

A part of the solution to this problem is to provide an information and referral package program for the elderly, with emphasis on prevention and remediation instead of blindness. They need to know about the progressive eye diseases of aging which should have early identification and treatment; where clinics providing ophthalmological and optometric services can be found; what kinds of low vision aids and adaptive appliances are available; what the devices are for measuring insulin without sight and where they can be trained in their use; information about library services, other agencies serving the blind, and organizations of the blind. A blind or visually impaired Senior who has benefitted from blind services should go out with the team who present this program in Senior Centers, Public Housing for the elderly, retirement hotels, at Health Fairs, churches, and to other agencies and community organizations providing services to sighted Seniors.

Going out to where the elderly live who are already in our programs will often show us how many more there are out there in the same neighborhoods, retirement hotels, or Senior citizens' public housing projects who don't know about our services. In one retirement hotel where two of our Seniors live who have been known to us for several years, the manager told me of over twenty blind old people living there we didn't know about. In the same neighborhood there are at least a half dozen other such retirement hotels but we don't have staff enough to go into them yet. From this and other similar experiences, however, it becomes evident that a refocusing of agency efforts is necessary, from repetitive, time-filling services for the few to brief, informational and crisis-oriented contact with the many.

Sometimes out of ignorance of what blind services are available, and sometimes out of experience with blind-serving agencies who are reluctant to serve the elderly or who cannot accept those who are not yet certified as legally blind, social workers and others in contact with the needs of the elderly will not make referral for needed services. Getting a large-print Bible for a Senior Citizen in a Public Housing Project is a small matter for someone familiar with resources for the blind, but it may be impossible for a young social worker trying to take care of the needs of the 300 or more aged persons living there, 10% of whom could be expected to have some visual impairment (Butler, 178).

If the social worker for the elderly knows that she can call on the rehabilitation teacher for the blind in any emergency, or

even just to talk over what might be done in a difficult situation, services can be extended and unnecessary institutionalization can be prevented. For example, in one instance where such a relationship had not been established, the overburdened social worker got a totally blind aged woman institutionalized because the woman's daughter, herself over 65 and visually handicapped, couldn't take care of her any more due to the daughter's heart condition. Had the mother not been totally blind, the institution probably would not have accepted her, and alternative homemaker services could have been explored. The mother and daughter had been blind for years without receiving any special services, but during a crisis their blindness prevented them from getting appropriate help to continue their independent functioning. By the sighted, they were immediately stereotyped as both being utterly helpless, though they had been functioning independently for years. The development of supportive blind services to the agency for the aged would have prevented this family tragedy.

Staffing: Such services require available staff, and staff who are willing and able to flexibly take on new and different functions. Staff have to sandwich work with Seniors in between programs for the rehabilitation of employable young adults and the multiply handicapped. Since few agencies have staff working solely with the elderly, efforts put into Senior programs are often experienced as robbing Peter to pay Paul. Unfortunately, young Peter is often considered much more rewarding to work with than old Paul. In fact, some staff members are totally unwilling to work with the elderly. They find them depressing and wearisome, an unwelcome reminder that youth is fleeting and death awaits. Staff may also feel the need for some fairly rapid achievements to recharge their own batteries. They may prefer to serve the quick learners, the employables who can find jobs, the young who show promise, enthusiasm, and energy. It is draining to work with people who are deeply depressed, as the elderly newly blinded are.

Some of the negative attitudes toward the elderly blind may be corrected by in-service training. Even with the most positive attitudes, however, staff working with Seniors require much basic knowledge which should be continuously reinforced and updated through ongoing in-service training. Perhaps most important, is knowledge and skill in dealing with death and dying. At least half of the new applicants to our programs are in crisis due to the death of a spouse, parent, or child, or to the anniversary of such a death. During the program, at least one or two of the participants will die yearly, and some significant friends or family members outside the program will also die. Staff need training to help the elderly talk about these deaths and also about their own feelings, aroused on such occasions, that their own death is near.

Probably second most important in working with the elderly blind is knowledge of poverty, the suffering it causes, the social programs intended to alleviate it, and the woeful inadequacies of the financial benefits and services provided under them. Since about a fourth of the elderly have less income than the government's own conservative estimate of what constitutes poverty, it is necessary to know about and be sensitive to needs arising from this cause. Over half of the elderly have been estimated to live in deprivation, lacking food, essential drugs, and decent housing. While poverty is declining in other age groups, there has been an increase in both the number and the proportion of aged poor. The elderly are the fastest-growing poverty group, and many are thrown into poverty for the first time in old age, due to the drastic cutback of income in retirement, inflation eating away at this income, and catastrophic medical and hospital bills not fully covered by medicare (Butler).

A third important skill needed in working with Seniors is the ability to listen knowledgably and respond perceptively to emotional need. Many Seniors are so talkative they never get a real hearing. Usually they are trying to express something that is obscure to them as well as to their listener. This often turns out to be something of utmost importance when we finally understand what it is all about. The seemingly endless reminiscences of the elderly are an attempt to find meaning in their life by reviewing it and to hold on to a sense of self-worth in spite of all they have lost (Lewis and Butler). If the meaning and worth in what they say is not responded to, they talk all the more.

On the other hand, some Seniors talk too little because they are too full of anger and bitterness or depression at the losses and deprivations they have suffered. They are afraid they will be overwhelmed by their feelings or rejected by others if they express themselves. They need a sensitive, understanding approach by staff who are not themselves overburdened, angry, or depressed by their working conditions or their own private lives. Some elderly will be considered senile because they seem mentally confused. It is important to know that this might be an acute reversible brain syndrome which could respond successfully to early medical treatment (Butler). Too many elderly do not receive adequate medical care and are sent home by doctors and hospitals without careful work-ups and treatment just because they are old. Persons over 65 are the most susceptible to mental as well as physical illness and the least likely to obtain adequate treatment. Staff should know more about these problems. It is difficult, however, to find enough time for in-service training without decreasing services. Yet, if important needs of the elderly blind are being overlooked, then training is essential.

To meet the needs of the elderly who are learning blind adjustment skills, it is necessary to know how learning differs

in the mature adult from that of the young (Kay). Aging tends to decrease perceptual acuity of other senses besides the visual, slows down the central data-processing mechanism, or ability to "get it all together," and lessens the energy available to respond actively. There is increasing rigidity or "set" of persistent patterns of behavior and, of course, short term memory is impaired. Memory is especially impaired in tasks involving the continuous processing of incoming information which requires a series of different responses. The attention which the older person has to give to responding appropriately in a new situation interferes with or prevents the storage of incoming information.

Adaptations necessary in teaching the elderly are: (1) amplify, intensify, and repeat the content to be learned; (2) decrease the pace of instruction through pauses, interruptions for rest periods, and decrease the amount of content presented in a given segment; (3) reduce complexity of the task by eliminating unnecessary elements, or extraneous material; (4) reduce dependence on memorization by having essential instructions recorded on cassette available to the person to keep and replay.

Six general principles serve as guides to understanding the needs of elderly persons in a learning situation: diversification, habituation, integration, autonomy, relevance, and participation. Diversification emphasizes that elderly persons are more different from each other than younger persons and that therefore a program of instruction for the elderly should be tailor-made to fit each particular individual. Habituation means that force of habit becomes increasingly strong over the years so readiness for learning must be carefully developed. It cannot be taken for granted as in the young. Integration necessitates putting the separate parts of the task to be learned together into a meaningful whole because the elderly need more help with this than younger persons. Autonomy insures respect for the mature learner who is no longer subject to the authority of the teacher and knows best what he wants and needs to learn. Relevance focuses on the importance of instructional content that has immediate usefulness in the older person's life; learning that is problem-centered and directed toward achieving the older person's own goals. Participation is another way of saying "no impression without expression." The elderly need to participate actively in the learning situation. They will get little from being talked at, down to, or lectured.

The staff characteristic probably most responsible for limiting services to the elderly blind is professionalism, that is the pride and satisfaction professionals have in their own knowledge and skills. This leads them to be doers instead of enablers. Persons who are professionally trained as rehabilitation teachers and counselors look for opportunities to do teaching and counseling, rather than helping others do the teaching and counseling. This severely limits

the staff available to work with the elderly blind. To overcome this limitation, staff must use interns, students, volunteers, and the elderly themselves, sighted and blind, as a major source of staff for developing and maintaining programs for the elderly.

For example: A 76-year-old man, Mr. O, entered a blind-serving agency because he was in crisis. He was rapidly losing sight and had recently lost his wife. During a full-time, four-week program he learned more craft skills, which he had begun at home with his rehabilitation teacher. He also socialized with other blind Seniors, renewed a friendship with an elderly lady who was also losing sight, and became more hopeful that his life still had some promise. He continued for about six months in the Blind Center's Friday Senior program and then, with the help of a coordinator of sighted Senior programs, he organized a Senior Center in his church which now has 135 members, six of whom are blind. Now, at the age of 80, he is paid \$20 a session through a grant from a near-by community college for having a class of 25 or more Seniors, teaching them crafts.

Expanding services to help the elderly blind find satisfying opportunities for their talents and abilities requires the flexible and differential use of four alternative staffing patterns: (1) As skilled professional rehabilitation teachers and counselors, we should provide direct one-to-one services only during the crisis phase when vision is being rapidly or suddenly lost, or when loss of vision is compounded with other losses, such as the death of a spouse or enforced retirement. Suicide is much more likely in Seniors who have suddenly experienced multiple losses than in any other age group. During this crisis phase, the elderly blind should have intensive, frequent, as-needed, on-call services which should be available for a brief period, but then give way as soon as possible to other alternative forms of service.

(2) If the newly-blinded Senior needs or wants a prolonged period of service, this should be provided by interns, student teachers, volunteers, and professionally supervised nonprofessionals. In order to serve more elderly blind than the professional can himself serve on a one-to-one basis, he has to become an educator and supervisor of others. It is important in becoming an enabler to trust others to be helpful in their own way and not try to make them into a carbon copy of oneself. One needs to give freely of one's knowledge and experience while respecting and encouraging the learner to develop his own, unique style.

(3) When Seniors have obtained maximum benefit from the services we provide, or need other services we do not have, then the professional functions as a resource person, or advocate (Negrin), providing information and referral to a network of other community services and supportive relationships, and working to develop or

improve needed services when these are inadequate or do not exist. One important resource--which the professional can help develop from among the Seniors he has served--is the mutual aid group, of congenial elderly blind who can share experiences and give one another support, encouragement, and something to look forward to.

(4) More important for most elderly blind than traditional services for learning blind skills or talking about their feelings and problems with a counselor, is the opportunity to spend their time in satisfying ways, to feel useful and productive again, to have some new and interesting experiences. To serve these needs, the professional must know about volunteer programs and become skillful in working with volunteers of different ages and different skills. This involves providing opportunities for interesting, challenging, and useful tasks for volunteers to do and giving them the intangible rewards of attention, encouragement, and respect for their accomplishments.

Some elderly blind prefer to serve as volunteers themselves rather than receive services because they experience a return of self-respect when they themselves give service, and can handle the problem of adjustment to blindness in their own way, at their own pace. An example of this is a very bright, competent, talented 74-year-old woman who had a nervous breakdown when a sudden partial loss of vision interfered with her accustomed way of life. When she was referred by the psychiatric facility as no longer in need of their services, she could not accept blind services because trying to learn blind skills made her too nervous. She was willing, however, to serve as a volunteer and to help the other elderly blind in word games and handiwork because she had more sight than they did. Now she has lost more sight and has gotten a folding cane and is learning to use it, because she knows how helpful it is to a couple of Seniors she has gotten to know and identify with. Because she began talking about no longer being useful since she has lost the sight which gave her the advantage of being a volunteer, the rehabilitation teacher who works with her helped her develop a new program for teaching the Fishburne system to those who cannot learn Braille (Fishburne). In this instance, the rehabilitation teacher's really impressive skill is in accepting this woman on her own terms, being sensitively perceptive of her changing needs, and developing the kinds of situations in which she can find satisfaction in continuing to be useful, and learn new skills when she is motivated to do so.

Goal-setting: Ideally, when John Doe, Senior, initially comes into a blind service program, he should be able to state exactly what his goals are. We, the staff, should then be able to tell him what we will do to help him reach his goals, what he has to do himself, and how long it will take. We can then measure his performance and our performance in achieving our agreed-upon objective. In this way, we can be held accountable for doing what we said we would and

success or failure of the program can be determined (Register). Feedback on how we are doing helps us correct our errors and increases the efficiency and effectiveness of program operations. The objective measurement of planned goal achievement has been known for over twenty years as management by objective, or MBO. Now it is becoming increasingly emphasized, even insisted upon, as funds are becoming more limited. Some believe--though research evidence is conflicting--that management by objective improves job satisfaction as well as quantity and quality of service.

But the objectives of Seniors are hard to manage. They don't fit well into this idealized image. Let's take a representative example of what actually happens: Mr. S was referred to a Senior program because he was nearly 60 and was losing his sight. He was in crisis, trying to deal with enforced retirement. He did not know what his goals were or what he wanted, except to get his sight back and be able to work as a machinist again, because that had been his whole life. He was offered a program of Braille, mobility, ADL, and crafts because that is what the agency had to offer. He took it because he had no alternative. But being in a learning situation at his age made him feel very inadequate and nervous. He learned little and very slowly. He didn't want to talk about himself or his problems. Yet he kept coming back because he didn't have anything else to do. And he enjoyed the company of the other Seniors. A bachelor all his life, he met a congenial lady in the program, and they began living together because they would lose part of their disability benefits if they married. Now they live in a retirement hotel that has a full day's schedule of activities and recreation, but he continues in the blind-serving agency's program because it makes him uncomfortable to be in activities with the sighted.

He has been receiving blind services from several agencies for about four years. How can their performance be measured? How can they know whether in this instance their programs have been successful, whether they have been worth the investment of time and money? Certainly, this man's situation has greatly improved during the time he has been receiving services, and he might have broken down if he had been left to sit alone in his room without any help. But whatever the results, they were accomplished more by time and happenstance than by the focused, goal-directed efforts of the staff.

In working with Seniors, it is hard to get accurate feedback from clients, to find out if what one is doing is making any significant difference. This is bad for staff morale. It is too easy to fall into a rut, doing the same things over and over. Yet as we know from the literature on aging, Seniors have a wider range of needs than any other age group. They are more uniquely different from each other, and less likely to be well served all in the same way by the same kind of program. We can accomplish management by objective with Seniors only by setting ourselves the challenging goal of finding new

Seniors to serve, identifying new needs in those we are already serving, and searching out new resources for meeting these needs in new ways. Our success in doing these things can be measured.

We can commit ourselves, for instance, in FY'77-'78, to introduce a certain number of new Seniors into our program, based on how many we served last year and on our estimate of how much we can stretch ourselves to accomplish next year. We can commit ourselves to identify a certain number of new needs for service in the Seniors we already serve and to meet those needs. We can look for needs for information and referral, for participation in supportive mutual aid groups, for giving and receiving volunteer services. And we can commit ourselves to meeting with a certain number of other agencies and community organizations to discover what new resources may be available and how we can work better together to serve our clients' needs. At the end of the year, we can see whether we did what we said we would and, if not, consider why.

Working in close cooperation with agencies serving the sighted elderly serves a dual purpose: as a source of casefinding and referral for Seniors in need of short term blind services and as a resource bank for meeting other client needs. For example, an elderly client of a blind-serving agency needed home repairs: a broken window, exposed electrical wiring; inadequate locks. An agency serving the aged had funds to provide \$140 worth of home repairs per client and sent a man out to do the work immediately. Finding resources the client is entitled to and serving as an advocate to make sure the client gets them is an important aspect of service to the elderly blind (Negrin).

Funding: Because funds for services to the elderly blind are limited in agencies serving the needs of other blind age groups, it is important to use the services of agencies which have money specifically earmarked or appropriated for the elderly. But this necessitates a considerable amount of staff time and effort on a continuing basis to keep up to date on financial and service benefits available from the many different and continually changing federal and state programs affecting the aged. Ideally, this should also include joining political action efforts to prevent the erosion of program funding. Current legislative issues which will inevitably have an impact on services to the elderly blind are revenue sharing, Title XX, and health services funding. A fourth, and related issue is the evaluation of the cost of funding through grantsmanship.

The structure of service-delivery systems for the aged was provided by the original Older Americans Act, at the federal level in Title II and at the state level in Title III. Now, funding for services to the elderly depends in part on revenue sharing enactments which transfer the determination of how the money is to be spent to state and local governmental agencies through the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972 which has been renewed through 1980.

Currently, there is no proposed or anticipated legislation calling for special revenue sharing for the aged. Available data indicates that most of the 30 billion dollars of General Revenue Sharing funds appropriated for expenditure between 1972 and 1976 will have been spent by states and localities to support construction and other capital expenses or to provide tax relief rather than for maintenance of ongoing social services. According to a sample study of 218 governmental units, only two-tenths of one percent of the total funds were authorized for services to the aged (Estes). Most of the available data combines figures for the poor and aged. At the state level, only 4%, and at the local level, only 2% of General Revenue Sharing funds were used for services to the poor or aged. Clearly, the evidence points to the need for advocacy at state and local levels to obtain funds for the elderly, including the elderly blind.

According to a study conducted by the American Foundation for the Blind, 17 states use Title XX funds to deliver "Special Services for the Blind," while all states use these funds for services to the elderly, blind, and disabled who are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Current amendments to Title XX would permit states to determine whether services to the aged, blind, and disabled could be funded on the basis of "group eligibility," so that each individual in these categories would not have to be subjected to a demeaning means test (A.F.B.). Since the states have discretionary power as to how the federal funds under Title XX are to be spent, special efforts to advocate group eligibility for the elderly blind are necessary at the state level.

When funds are appropriated, they may not be released. For example, funds authorized to implement Home Health Service Projects, which could be important in the prevention of institutionalization of the elderly blind, were not released by HEW nor was a rescission bill enacted to make the withholding of funds legal. It was therefore necessary for the Comptroller General to institute a civil action in the U.S. District Court to prevent the scheduled lapse of this \$103,159,000. at the end of this fiscal year (Social Legislation). To obtain the funds necessary to provide needed services to the elderly blind requires a continued costly effort of agency staff (Ewalt and Cohen), and a struggle through every avenue of political action at the local, state, and federal level. For this, the huge membership organizations such as the National Council of Senior Citizens and the American Association of Retired Persons are our allies in providing effective and informed lobbies to prevent the elderly, including the blind, from being neglected.

Blind-serving agencies can do their part to make sure the elderly blind aren't neglected by making a commitment to provide them a more equitable share of staff time and effort. To do this demands "affirmative action" to search out the hidden elderly blind and give them, first and foremost, information about the services

and benefits available to them as visually impaired elderly persons. It requires care and concern that the elderly blind are receiving adequate ophthalmological, optometric, and other medical services; that they are receiving the maximum financial, nutritional, and special housing benefits available in the community; that they are receiving low vision evaluation and training, adjustment skills, and opportunities to socialize, enjoy regular recreation, and to spend their time in useful, and gratifying ways. This requires us to work closely with other agencies serving the elderly to provide a protective and coordinated network of concerned professionals and volunteers who will be available when needed and wanted but who will not hang on too long or impose themselves too aggressively.

To provide the elderly blind with their fair share of services, we need to work hard and unremittingly. To keep us at it, we need the reinforcement and support of those who are committed. One of those was Father Carroll who said, shortly before he died, "And it can be done! At our St. Raphaels, a geriatric adjustment center, we have taken elderly persons who have just lost their sight, and persons blind all their lives who have just become old. We have seen them in great dependence and have watched them (not all of them) move in days and weeks to an utterly new state of independence. It is not the Fountain of Youth; but the results sometimes appear like rejuvenation. Certainly there is new self-understanding and new ability to face the problems of age and blindness (Carroll).

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THE SHELTERED WORKSHOP FOR THE BLIND AS A PROVIDER OF ALTERNATE LIFE STYLES

By

Herbert Rusalem and Harold Richterman

American workshops for the blind have undergone a dramatic change during the past 20 years. For example, most of the more than 85 workshops associated with the National Industries for the Blind (NIB) have expanded their functions well beyond the traditional provision of long-term sheltered employment to selected blind persons. These workshops for the blind now are complex facilities that offer multiple services of an increasingly professional calibre.

Although workshops for the blind vary widely from each other, they maintain a common core of services which differentiate them from other helping facilities for blind persons. These differentiating characteristics are:

1. There is remuneration for work.
2. There are two motives in a workshop--to benefit the participants and to earn a profit.
3. Benefiting the blind workshop participant is the primary concern rather than earning a profit.
4. Increasingly demanding performance standards are implemented.
5. The workshop is a necessary expedient in view of the disabilities of the blind and current labor conditions which are antagonistic to blind laborers.
6. A workshop for the blind should not be an institutional setting.
7. The workshop is one component among many offered by the community in its effort to serve the blind.
8. Vocational objectives are clearly stated and accountability is comprehensive.

Within this common substructure, the workshops for the blind associated with NIB differ from each other in many respects:

1. Some are free standing workshops; others are parts of comprehensive community service agencies.
2. Some provide for only one alternative work style (usually long term sheltered work); others offer multiple alternatives.
3. Some serve large numbers of severely and multi-handicapped blind participants; others enroll relatively few.
4. Some offer many supportive services (such as counseling, low vision services, vocational evaluation, and training), among others, a few still offer a small range of such services.
5. Some are large enterprises that rival in size and resources private enterprises in their communities; others are small and/or uncomplicated organizations.
6. Some stress earnings alone; others give equal stress to the rehabilitative and therapeutic aspects of remunerative work.
7. Some offer vigorous job placement services that successfully provide entry into competitive employment for many blind persons every year; others are more limited in their job development and job placement efforts.

The point is, that despite a core of common programming and philosophy, workshops for the blind cannot be considered to be a monolithic group of agencies. On the contrary, each workshop has its own identity and emphasis and each goes about the task of achieving its objectives in its own manner. However, one trend that overshadows both the commonalities and the differences among workshops for the blind is their universal recognition that blind persons differ widely from each other and require, can use, and demand an infinite variety of alternative life styles. It is essential to understand that these life-style choices (often made with the assistance of professional personnel) are not irrevocable. That is, as conditions and client capacities change and as client readiness for other possibilities becomes apparent, a blind person may move readily from one workshop life style to another. Invariably, client needs determine the ebb and flow of this individual movement process. The paramount consideration is that workshop participants should not get locked into any unjustified fixed role. Movement toward or away from mainstreaming into competitive industry, often the target level, should be possible at any point.

The varied life styles engendered by workshops for the blind will be discussed in some detail in this paper with the understanding that only a minority of workshops offer the total range. In practice, most encompass only one or, at best several of them. No judgement should be made about the special intrinsic value of any life style for all blind people, as a group. Indeed, a desirable alternative for one client may be undersirable for another. Setting up an artificial hierarchy of life styles (with entry into competitive employment serving as the apex) is not only unrealistic but can be psychologically destructive to clients who may be able to attain one or another of the other alternatives. Each life style noted below merits equal dignity, respect, and social approval. As an illustration, for the blind person who cannot reasonably be expected to enter industry or prefers not to, the Industrial Workshop or the Subsidized Workshop life style may be even more relevant. In everyday experience some blind persons can be made even more handicapped by the value systems of those who serve them as by the limitations of the disability. Thus, if the maximum potential of workshops for service to blind persons is to be achieved in the future, alterations will be required in the "snobbism" and anti-workshop bias of counselors, social workers, and others who work in this field. The major workshop life styles described below indicate the range of programming possibilities in workshops for the blind. Some shops offer only one or two of these alternatives; many offer three or more of them, either on the same premises or in different buildings.

The Workshop Industries Life Style

This alternative workshop life style is open to blind persons who have sufficient employability to enter competitive industry but who cannot find a job in the private sector or choose not to do so. Such individuals work in the most highly developed segment of the total workshop enterprise, one which requires competitive level skill, stamina, and work habits. The requisite work tasks, job demands, and productivity and quality requirements parallel those of outside industry and the prevailing work conditions duplicate those found in a typical profit making plant in the community. The ratio of supervisors to workers conforms to industrial standards and workers are required to learn new tasks expeditiously and without excessive instructional intervention.

The workshop industries life style is that of the usual blue collar worker. Wages are paid at or above the statutory minimum level, an error free performance is expected, and the work experience is perceived primarily as a job. Workers are accorded respect and adequate compensation for their production and, generally, some sort of a participatory system provides for worker input in some workshop matters. Blind workshop participants in this category should, and often do, regard themselves as employees, not clients, of the workshop.

Since they hold a job, they have fewer conflicts about the client employee role and feel less of a need to be obliged to the workshop and its sponsors for the services they receive. To all intents and purposes, the industries worker is an autonomous employee who compares favorably in earnings, working conditions, and all other aspects of the job with other workers in the community in the same or similar occupations.

Workshop industries employees tend to feel less stigma than other workshop participants in relation to their workshop affiliations because they pay their own way in productivity terms, contribute to the economic health of the total workshop, and function as well as other workers in the community. Traditionally, there has been a tendency on the part of some workshops to be ambiguous about various participatory levels, incorporating in all of them some elements of employment and some of service. This had been disadvantageous to the industries level worker since the quasi sheltered status accorded him has negative implications for self-regard and family and community relationships. As workshops for the blind increasingly define and differentiate more precisely the various life style opportunities which they foster, the social needs of each group are being met more fully with consequent benefit to all concerned. If a capable blind person cannot or will not find or accept employment in the competitive market place, the industries life style may be a feasible option. Since this is a relatively new concept, it may be expected that the number of workshops for the blind offering this alternative will increase in the years ahead, particularly if high rates of general unemployment persist in the years ahead.

The Long-Term Sheltered Worker Life Style

Many blind persons are unable to meet the standards of productivity and work behavior required in competitive industry because of the severity of their disabilities, complicating emotional, physical, intellectual, and/or social problems, the effects of prolonged experience deprivation, travel or safety problems, and the need for continuing emotional shelter and support in a work experience. Under the present free enterprise system, industry does not voluntarily hire such blind persons because they ordinarily detract from the profitability of the enterprise. Indeed, even under the especially favorable adapted conditions of a workshop, such individuals often fail to be sufficiently productive to earn at least the statutory minimum wage through their own work performance. Unless some special public employment program is established for these workers in the future, they face only two alternatives: (1) protracted unemployment, or (2) participation in a workshop program.

As part of the long term sheltered workshop life style, the blind person is assigned to a regular position in an industrially oriented non-profit workshop setting and receives remuneration that is keyed to his productivity plus, in some instances, a subsidy to ensure a more comfortable standard of living. The work tasks assigned to persons in this category often are compatible with the worker's abilities, although, even at best, individual productivity is sub-standard when compared with workers in industry. Although flexible working conditions and empathic supervision are built into the long term workshop system, the emphasis is clearly upon productive effort. Rewards are tied to functional work behaviors and the attainment of stipulated production goals. Even though worker functioning is below competitive levels, work is the focus of the experience and production is the name of the game. Presumably, the blind individual had access to suitable rehabilitation services prior to long term workshop employment and benefited from these services to the degree that his disability allows. Now, having reached some stability in his vocational development, the long term worker will be provided with employment at the highest feasible level. The long term workshop life style resembles competitive work in some respects. Thus despite having access to supportive services, the long term worker is in a no-nonsense situation in which production is the name of the game. Attendance, punctuality, and work behaviors may be flexible and limits are invariably set upon the deviations in these areas which will be tolerated. If an individual cannot conform to these long term workshop standards despite all assistance given him, he will be transferred, if possible, to a more suitable work situation. As long term workshop "employees," blind persons usually are provided with a package of fringe benefits, including insurance plans, authorized absence, social security, and vacations.

Concurrently, the long term workshop participant maintains a client status. Thus, workshop personnel tend to be far more sensitive to his needs than any competitive employer would be. Indeed, a certain range of deficit in work behaviors is expected and, in some cases, attempts are made during the long term experience to work with such deficits. To this end, counseling, casework, medical services, educations, and/or recreation may be made available on a continuing basis. From time to time, the individual may be reminded of his client status by having a special subminimum wage workshop certificate issued on his behalf, or by receiving subsidies to "beef up" his income to a guaranteed minimum wage level regardless of his limited productivity.

This duality of long term client and long term worker does much to shape the long term workshop life style. With few exceptions, both the workshop and the blind person are confronted by a need to balance the two roles. In practice, at one point, the workshop may treat the individual as a worker and at another time as a client. For his part, the blind person may want to view himself as a client when there are benefits to be gained therefrom and as a worker when

advantages accrue from that status, as well. In many workshops, clients (or workers) in the long term status are periodically re-evaluated to ascertain changes in vocational performance and readiness. Thus, the worker experience may be interrupted while a rehabilitation client emphasis is temporarily reintroduced into the client's life and, if no status change is recommended, there is likely to be another shift as the client leaves the rehabilitation client status again to resume his role as a long term worker. Needless to say, this introduces an element of insecurity, doubt, and uncertainty into this life style.

Client earnings in the long term status may present a dilemma to the blind person. Upon occasion, he may find that his total income would be about the same or even greater if he relied exclusively upon Social Security or Welfare grants rather than upon workshop earnings as a major or contributory source of support. This comparability of income can generate emotional conflict. Although he may enjoy the work experience, the long term workshop participant often is able to see disadvantages to continued long term workshop participation under these conditions, including: (1) Equivalent income may be more secure and stable under public grants, (2) He may consider that he is really working "for nothing," and (3) Being supported by "others" may appeal to his dependency needs. Workshop personnel view this conflict as an especially unfortunate one since they consider the act of working a therapeutic testament of one's humanness which should be vigorously encouraged and supported by society. In reality, however, the American system has unwittingly built in economic disincentives to work which discourage some blind persons from accepting long term workshop placement. As a consequence, a blind person may elect a life style of unproductive unemployment, becoming vulnerable thereby to social stagnation or retrogression. Even when long-term workshop participants opt for entry into a workshop, remnants of this conflict persist. Thus, the person is continually aware of the fact that he might be doing about as well economically without working. As a result of the ambiguities and conflicts noted above, long term workshop participants often function in regions of uncertain and shifting perceptions which are neither comfortable for the individuals concerned or the workshops that serve them.

The Work Activities Life Style

This workshop life style was founded on the premise that remunerative work is a value cherished also by blind persons whose abilities are so limited that even the modified requirements of the long term workshop are beyond their capacities. Such individuals need to work because other life experiences do not yield for them sufficient psychic gain to sustain mental health and gratification regardless of vocational competency. The central need of such persons is for regular involvement in remunerative work activities

that produce usable products and reward effort with monetary compensation. This need to work in this group may be as strong as it is in groups of more capable blind workers. Yet, the normal conditions of sheltered workshop programming are too challenging for them because their productivity is below normal workshop standards and their adjustment programs are so pervasive that even the relatively permissive and empathic conditions of sheltered employment are insufficient to meet their individual personality needs. In effect, they require a work activities program within or associated with a sheltered workshop which provides a physically and programmatically differentiated service designed expressly for vocationally oriented blind persons of quite modest work capacities.

The work activities client adopts a life style that varies from that of other workshop participants. Typically, the hours spent in vocational activities usually do not constitute a full work day; the supervision and instruction provided is far more detailed, individualized, and extended; while earnings may be important they are not crucial and without exception, fall well below the statutory minimum wage; the interpersonal relationships experienced on work tasks are as important as productivity, if not more so; and the vocational activities performed generally are not perceived as constituting employment at any level. Essentially, the participant is engaged in a day center program that happens to stress modified remunerative work as well as socialization or educational activities.

In this role of day center participant the work activities client attacks the problem of fruitfully using otherwise uncommitted daylight hours through working to the best of his ability on productive tasks even though work performance is modest. Thus, considerable client absence may be tolerated; quality of work may be irregular, task productivity may be minimal, and workbench behaviors may be social rather than business like. To all intents and purposes, job demands if any, in the work activities situation are highly individualized and performance pressures are minimized. Although work activities center participants may be viewed as relatively competent except for their limited ability to work, it is recognized that work and perhaps work alone can assure continuing client functioning at the current level.

Transition may occur upward from work activities to long term workshop experiences over a period of time, as well and, less commonly, downward from work activities into non-vocational day center programs or even withdrawal from community based workshop participation altogether. Although earnings are not the crucial element in the work activities situation, they are important to many blind persons. Attempts made in some workshops to displace very low earners and involve them in non-vocational activities constitute a disservice for the person whose value system requires continued engagement in

remunerative productive activities. Workshops that do not offer work activities programs tend to have a vital gap in the continuity of the service they provide and, in fact, offer little for vocationally oriented highly limited blind persons in their communities.

The Workshop Vocational Rehabilitation Life Style

Many blind persons attain a readiness for employment without ever entering a sheltered workshop program. Others require a workshop experience as one of the components in their vocational rehabilitation plan. The latter group need a work experience under controlled environmental conditions to develop improved work habits, work skills, and job related interpersonal relationships. Even for this group employment readiness conceivably could be developed without participation in a workshop program, but the real life conditions and demands of a workshop experience may offer the most efficacious means of doing so. When a rehabilitation counselor arrives at a joint judgment with a blind client that a remunerative involvement in a real work environment is necessary or desirable and when this environment cannot or should not be arranged in competitive industry, a rehabilitative workshop experience is indicated.

Although the workshop rehabilitation client is in most respects, not an employee but a trainee, Federal, State, and local laws and procedures require that he/she be compensated at a commensurate rate of pay for productive work that creates salable products or services. Accordingly, prescribed employment training in a workshop occurs on commercial work tasks for which remuneration is provided. From every viewpoint, then, a rehabilitation client's limited stay in a workshop always focuses upon an employment experience. Indeed, the central dynamic that the workshop lends to a total rehabilitation program is just this attribute. Through functioning as a trainee in a real place of work under industrial (albeit flexible and individualized) conditions, employment deterrents are removed from the life of the blind person.

Any rehabilitation workshop program is an experience that is circumscribed both in time and content with the client being in attendance only as long as gains are being made in employability level and progress is being noted toward a more permanent and appropriate job placement. When such progress slows perceptibly or stops or when employment readiness is achieved, less justification can be offered for the continuation of the transitional work experience. Thus, the rehabilitation workshop client's life style is characterized by tentativeness and impermanence since the workshop is perceived by all concerned as a passing phase that hopefully will lead to a more stable work experience.

Since the central thrust of a rehabilitation workshop service is client development, work is only one of a number of vocational helping dynamics that function concurrently to elevate employability readiness. Among these other factors may be intensive counseling, skills training, group guidance focusing on job-seeking and job-holding behaviors, assistance with mobility, communications, personal care, and home adjustment problems, and special interventions to enhance learning capacities. Customarily, continuing evaluations are made of the client's progress and professional counseling is offered to assist clients to make the fullest possible use of the workshop rehabilitation experience.

In the role of temporary workshop participants, rehabilitation clients share only partially in the social life of the workshop and may even be thought of by others in the workshop as "outsiders." Such outsiders often are viewed as temporary "visitors" by the long term group since they are expected to move on before establishing a stable workshop status. At the same time, they may be viewed as favored individuals upon whom intensive staff concern is lavished and for whom extensive hope is held. Indeed, workshop staff members often invest themselves more fully in the rehabilitation group than in other service groups.

In at least one respect, workshop rehabilitation clients have some autonomy in relation to workshop personnel. Since a state vocational rehabilitation agency is probably paying a fee for their rehabilitative work experience, they may perceive themselves as students rather than recipients of community largesse. In this framework, they can more easily hold the workshop accountable for contracted services and if dissatisfied with such services, they can have recourse to the State Rehabilitation Agency Counselor. Furthermore, as trainees, they enjoy a special social status, maintain different expectations of the workshop program and are less likely to subordinate themselves to it. Yet, in time, the attractive stability of the workshop environment and the special understandings and support which it affords the rehabilitation client may be seductive. Thus, the life style of the workshop rehabilitation client often is marked by a continuing struggle to avoid being trapped by desirables of the workshop milieu even when it would be in the person's best interest to leave it at the earliest opportunity. Life for the workshop rehabilitation client is often full of partially resolved dependency needs and approach avoidance conflicts, suggesting that anxiety levels can be raised for the person en route to competitive industry who, simultaneously, can be drawn to, and repelled from, the workshop.

As a result of their personal perceptions of the overall advantages and shortcomings of sheltered workshops, some workers with the blind have developed biases for or against workshop facilities. Any blanket commendation or criticism of workshops is likely

to be counter-productive for some blind people. For example, those who urge the dissolution of all workshops for the blind may derive personal comfort from the "righteousness" of their position but their feelings have little relevance for the needs of blind clients. Their central concept should be that blind persons need more, not fewer options. In practice, any generalizations about workshops for the blind is more true for some clients and less true for others. As long as even a few blind persons need workshop services, there is a justification for such facilities. And the fact is that many thousands of blind people need workshops. Obviously, workshops should be continually re-assessed and upgraded--but perceptions of their current alleged deficits is not a sound argument for their eradication. The absence of a workshop when a blind person needs one is far more catastrophic than any limitations which workshops may be presumed to have.

The Learning Capacities Research Project^{*} (Sponsored by the Federation of the Handicapped in New York City) has evolved procedures that can be used in every day service situations to ascertain the readiness and need of blind persons for various interventions and settings. In working with blind persons in New York and New Jersey, the Rusalems have assisted state and voluntary agency rehabilitation counselors not only to ascertain which blind clients need workshop interventions, but within the variety of life style fostered by such facilities, it is possible to suggest the workshop life style which will be most appropriate for an individual and to prescribe conditions within that workshop life style that will yield the most rapid advance toward stated rehabilitation and life sustaining objectives.

Consequently, if the dominant value is that of helping blind persons rather than ourselves, it is no longer rational to attack workshops for the blind categorically or to exclude blind clients from them in an arbitrary fashion. Workshops are as essential as any other modality and when used selectively rather than as a last resort for clients for whom no other alternative appears to exist, workshops for the blind can be expected to have an even greater impact on clients than in the past. Following the procedures developed by Rusalem and Rusalem in the Learning Capacities Research Project, professional workers should become increasingly skillful in selecting blind persons for workshop service and then, custom designing that service to meet individual needs, and cooperating

^{*} This Project, supported by Federal, State and local funds has identified the learning area as the central cause of failure in rehabilitation by severely disabled blind persons. Innovative client evaluation prescriptive, implementation procedures developed by the project have been widely used by New York and New Jersey State Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind with highly positive results.

with National Industries for the Blind and local facilities in their never ending quest for improved workshop programming. Past difficulties in using workshops fully in service to blind persons have resulted as much from professional workers' misunderstandings of the workshop concept and their inability to integrate the workshop experience into a total helping program as from the inherent imperfections of various workshops.

The fullest benefits are derived from workshop programs when professional personnel understand the life styles generated by such facilities and, accordingly, assign clients to them whose life style needs are compatible with workshop programs.

BLUEPRINT FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
IN CANADA

By

Paul C. O'Neill

"A curious factor about the blindness system in America is that, while almost all organizations for the blind uphold the desirability of the restorative approach to rehabilitation, most of them follow an accommodative approach." So wrote Dr. Robert A. Scott in his book, The Making of Blind Men, published in 1969.

With this idea, perhaps more controversial at that time than today, Scott brought into focus the root cause of the attack on the "blindness system," as he calls it, through the 1970's, not only in the United States but in Canada as well.

By the restorative approach, Scott means a program to develop sufficient independence to lead a normal life. By the accommodative approach, he means a program designed for the dependent. "Blindness poses enormous obstacles to independence," he writes, "insurmountable by the majority of people." Since an agency must serve the majority, it geared the program to the needs of the dependent blind person.

For 70 years in Canada, and longer in the United States, Scott's accommodative approach seemed to work well enough. Agencies provided the most constructive services they could and considered all of them not accommodative but restorative. Blind people accepted them not merely with thanks but with warm enthusiasm.

In Canada services began as early as 1906 with the establishment of the Canadian Free Library for the Blind. The library provided braille and New York Point and Moon Type books to a handful of blind persons in the Toronto area. Its services were amalgamated with those of The Canadian National Institute for the Blind when CNIB came into existence in 1918.

The success of the program of CNIB led to its growth from a single office with a staff of three in the early days to a 50-office, nation-wide service by 1950. By 1960 more than 20 of these offices had expanded to specially designed general service centers built for the use of blind Canadians. By 1970 the staff required to man the

constantly broadening program had grown to 2,000 blind and sighted persons with the required skills. By that date, too, 80 different services were listed in CNIB's national annual report in 14 different classifications.

Prevention of blindness was always an integral part of the CNIB program. By 1970 the prevention program had developed through a multi-phased education service to a point where it was assisting millions of Canadians to take care of their sight.

CNIB staff did not do the job alone. From its beginnings volunteer interest was high and, as the program developed across the country, volunteers took a leading role. They served at the various management levels from National Council, CNIB's policy-making body, to the grass roots committees, assisted in the residences, drove consumers to the doctor, taped and brailled students' text books, coached on the bowling lanes and lent their talents in every possible way.

Through the early decades of the 20th century, blind people responded favorably. They used the services, lived in the specially built residences, stayed at CNIB summer holiday centers and summer camps and added new strings to their bows as they went along. Using CNIB facilities from coast to coast, blind Canadians developed more than 75 recreation clubs under the banner of The Canadian Council of the Blind, which is financed by CNIB. They built up bowling tournaments, fishing events, swimming meets and the quiet recreations like checkers and chess. A recent development is amateur radio that has now about 300 fully licensed hams equipped and on the air on their own transmitting stations.

Down the years blind Canadians accepted employment in CNIB sheltered shops, industrial catering or factory assembly lines. Educated people made their way to the CNIB staff with a few, more venturesome, moving into the business world, other social service agencies and the professions. Over the last 12 years, with an expansion in the CNIB training program and vocational guidance services, blind Canadians have been employed in an ever-widening variety of careers outside CNIB. At present more than 40 different careers are open to blind people. More than 3,000 blind consumers hold these positions, a considerable achievement when you realize that more than 50 percent of Canada's blind population--now 30,000 registered with CNIB--have reached 65 years of age when they lose their sight.

Under the guidance of these services, life for the blind Canadian moved quietly along until the late 1960's. Around that time rumblings of trouble in many locations across the country began to surface. In some six of the ten provinces of Canada young blind people began forming new associations. Where, in earlier years, such groups had been glad enough to unite with CNIB for financing

and leadership, these new groups made no connection with the agency and wanted none. They obtained their own funds through government sources. At that time government bodies were more ready to listen to the demands of new struggling entities than to the voices of the familiar established organization.

The new boys were not so much concerned with rehabilitation as they were with rights--discrimination in jobs, education, housing, access to public places and travel. Along with the sighted, they were influenced by the new thinking of the hippie scene, the permissive society, women's liberation and the other new isms that engulfed North America in the late 60's and early 70's. The new groups were opposed to established organizations and bitterly resented the patronizing treatment they claimed to receive from those in authority.

In Nova Scotia a group of blind university students and their associates founded the Blind Rights Action Movement (BRAM). With the help of a lawyer they researched and wrote a survey on the condition of the blind in the Maritimes. Their main target was the Halifax School for the Blind and their recommendations brought about many important reforms in the education of blind Maritimers.

Other associations used their government grants to criticize education too. With only six schools for blind children in Canada, many students had to travel hundreds of miles to the classroom. The new groups shouted for attention and demanded school facilities nearer home. They called for an end to segregation of the blind person in education and told authorities that facilities must be set up in such a way that the blind child could attend the school around the corner.

Their requests were not new. CNIB had been pointing out the same needs for years but the new boys knew how to use the media. They won the support of TV interview programs and radio talk shows, then just coming into their own through the telephone contact. They wrote letters to the press denouncing the education system, several CNIB services and the attitude of people in general towards the blind. Always ready for a controversy, the media fanned the flames. The association people used half-truths and made many inaccurate statements in front of the cameras but that made little difference. For comments the media often turned to the nearest CNIB office where professional personnel were reluctant to speak. It was not easy to comment on false information. Unaccustomed to the controversial approach, the CNIB staff was accused of being defensive. This only added additional hay to the fires and often gave the new groups the image of instant excellence with the average audience.

During those noisy years the directors of CNIB's eight divisions bore the brunt of the attack. Frequently at their desks, busy about their duties, the directors would get a phone call from a radio show. "I have a friend of yours with me," the anchor man

would say, "and he's got some questions for you." Then the show guest, usually a blind person, would ask questions that dealt with his personal relationship with CNIB or with the case information of someone else. To answer such questions over the air would have been a breach of confidentiality. If you have ever seen a politician under fire from a hall full of hecklers, you know how hard it is to handle their questions. Add to it the confidential nature of the CNIB material, and you have an impossible situation.

When Ross C. Purse was appointed Managing Director in 1973 one of his first duties was to visit all eight divisions to meet the boards, the staff and the blind people. In front of the media as CNIB's chief national executive, he was prepared for questions about future plans, services he would like to develop and his personal life--the questions a new chief in a national post expects to answer. "Instead, it was confrontation all the way," he said. "I could talk about our mobility training, but I could not guarantee the right to rent apartments. I could discuss the benefits of a dog guide but I could not promise access to every restaurant in town."

Analyzing the situation as a whole, Mr. Purse saw that the BRAM survey in the Maritimes had focussed on important unmet needs in the eastern provinces. It had awakened interest and made constructive recommendations for improvements. Some of the other groups had written reports but none had attempted to determine a nation-wide pattern. Moreover, highly regarded citizens, both blind and sighted, were asking for a survey that would bring to light the real nature of the problems and suggest their solution.

Then, in 1974, Mr. Purse was one of Canada's chief delegates to the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind. "There I discovered that Canada was not alone in its confrontation with new groups of blind persons," he said. "Delegates from other countries had the same concerns."

Supported as he was by the international picture and the interest expressed by consumers and other Canadians, Mr. Purse recommended to CNIB's National Council the undertaking of a nation-wide study. Such a study could determine what the needs were, how well they were being met and what could be done to meet those found wanting. Mr. Purse explained his thinking like this.

"The survey must be objective in character, directed by an outsider and set up in such a way that blind persons in every province and the northern territories will have a chance to participate."

By the fall of '74, Mr. Purse had won the support of National Council and the federal government. Health and Welfare Canada agreed to participate up to 50 percent of the total cost.

On September 10, 1974, National Council inaugurated the National Survey on the Unmet Needs of Blind Canadians. To head the program they hired Professor Cyril Greenland, M.Sc., a sociologist with McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. Professor Greenland had conducted several surveys for other organizations and came to CNIB with an open mind and a capacity for the research before him.

His first goal was to reach blind people. He set up a National Steering Committee composed mainly of blind consumers from different walks of life and representative of the ten provinces--15 people in all. One CNIB staff member was assigned to the Steering Committee. She was Miss L. D. Cowan, M.S.W., Coordinating Consultant, Social Services, who served as coordinator and chairperson, and provided the director with statistical information and other resource material.

The committee members, in turn, assisted in a program to reach blind persons in their home towns and to encourage them to speak up on the unmet needs as each one saw them.

With the structure organized, Professor Greenland and the national members of the Steering Committee travelled from coast to coast, holding two-day consultations with blind service users. They heard the views not only of blind persons themselves but extended the contact to relatives, CNIB volunteers and staff, outside educators, rehabilitation specialists and government departments. The deaf/blind and the multi-handicapped blind were also encouraged to participate.

The survey was much broader than the CNIB program alone. It included as many disciplines as possible--community involvement, concessions, diagnostic services, education and training, employment, higher education, housing, mechanical and technical aids, pre-school program, prevention, preservation of residual sight and restoration, public education, research, social and recreational programs, social services, transcription services, transportation, treatment with family involvement, vocational rehabilitation.

The Steering Committee was also responsible for the seeking of briefs, contact with the news media, contact with special groups--The Canadian Council of the Blind, parents of blind children, blind parents, the elderly blind at home or in institutions, students and youth groups, education, health and welfare agencies, veterans and war blinded. Altogether 2,000 people, 80% blind persons, responded by phone, by letters and informal briefs. Another 200 participated in the face to face consultations in each province.

The research and collection of information occupied the complete year of 1975. Then came the writing of the report. The job would have frightened many a qualified specialist, but Professor

Greenland sifted the data, sorted the material into logical order and came up with a 156-page book in English, 164 pages in French. Under the title "Vision Canada," the book contains 10 chapters with more than 50 major recommendations to CNIB, government, universities and other community organizations.

Speaking editorially, the Toronto Star wrote, "Greenland documents the charge that in an affluent economy, the blind are the poorest of the poor. The vast majority of blind children get little or no education. If they're thought, sometimes mistakenly, to be retarded too, they can spend years in institutions where they're maltreated or neglected. Adult blind persons are scarcely better off. Even when they're able to work and are self-supporting, they're discriminated against in public places, housing and employment. The designers of cities, transportation systems and public buildings appear to live in a fantasy world and act as if the population consisted entirely of olympic athletes with fast reflexes and 20-20 vision."

The Star continues, "Greenland urges Canadian press, the cooperative news-gathering agency, to provide a weekly digest of news and public affairs on cassette, available through the mail or public libraries. He accuses the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation of scarcely recognizing the existence of the blind and he recommends special programs on prime time on radio and television. He says examples of discrimination in housing, especially low income housing, are numerous. His most vivid example of discrimination concerns owners of dog guides. In the absence of statutes specifically protecting their legal rights, many dog guide owners have been refused admittance to most transportation systems, hotels and restaurants. Greenland is critical of CNIB and says 'In endeavouring to care for all the needs of blind people, CNIB tends to promise more than it or any group could deliver.'"

He claimed this CNIB approach was a disservice instead of a service. It let the communities off the hook and removed their responsibilities for blind citizens. To restore this obligation CNIB should remove itself from as many direct services as possible and train personnel in government, education and other outside organizations to provide the program. "CNIB should become a major resource for research, development and training for all the helping professions," he wrote, "specially for education, social welfare, public health, medicine, science and technology." A major point referred to throughout the survey was the need to include more blind consumers in the formation of services since they no longer wish to be recipients of service only.

The Star also said, "Greenland's report calls for a better break for the blind--in education, in employment opportunities, in public assistance. It should be heeded by responsible government

and community authorities. Action to provide equal opportunity for blind Canadians is imperative, not just for the 30,000 persons afflicted today but because the number is expected to double in the next 25 years.

The fact that the Institute itself commissioned the study suggests it is aware of deficiencies and ready to reform itself."

Once the book was published and distributed August 26, 1976 critics were quick to seize the spotlight again. They criticized Professor Greenland for being too soft with CNIB. One group sent him a 72-point critique on the report, but their remarks were offset by the congratulatory letters that poured in from citizens in every walk of life.

So far no firm decisions have been made. The report is too far reaching. A special committee of CNIB's National Council has been named to study the ideas, examine the recommendations and report to the Council at its meeting in mid November, 1976. The committee has had several meetings to date but the implementation is a matter for the entire Council. The action will take place over a long period of time on a priority basis.

No matter how diverse were the target groups of the Unmet Needs Study, the recommendations always had the same objective--the blind person's rights to human dignity, to maximum independence, to social acceptance. There is not the slightest hint of Scott's accommodative approach. Instead, the approach is aggressively restorative and holds great promise for the Making of Blind Men/Women in the years to come.

As Ross Purse observed, "The Unmet Needs Study is a challenge to all Canadians for it calls for greater community involvement with blind persons. As far as CNIB is concerned, the report is an outside assessment of our services and will serve as a source of new directions for future developments over the next 25 years."

THE BLIND PERSON'S IMPACT ON PRIVATE AGENCIES FOR THE BLIND

By

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When I was asked to write the chapter on "The Blind Person's Impact on Private Agencies for the Blind," I was a little uneasy--I was not sure that I could be objective enough; I wondered if my blindness would interfere with my objectivity--would it allow me to give an accurate picture of the blind person's impact on private agencies for the blind?

I know that I have some feelings about the agencies for the blind not having a sufficient number of blind persons on their boards. Is this because I am blind, or is it because of my professional experience in working in the field of blindness? I have resolved the question by recognizing the simple fact that I am a blind consumer who is a professional and I am writing from that point of view.

In the 1830's residential schools for the blind came into existence in the United States with the establishment of the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts, and the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind in New York City. Here blind children were taught daily living skills as well as the rudiments in education. However, once these children reached adulthood and were preparing to leave the schools, educators were again faced with a dilemma--they had educated their students, but not for employment.

Prominent people in the larger metropolitan areas wanted to help these blind adults find employment so they began agency-sponsored workshops which provided segregated employment opportunities--these began parallel to the Industrial Revolution in the United States. Soon, small sheltered workshops for blind persons sprang up throughout the country. Mattress and broom making seemed to be the two major work items. These workshops were the start of the first adult programs in the country offering services to blind adults. They were primarily located in the northeastern part of the United States. Even today the predominant number of private agencies are located east of the Mississippi and north of the Mason-Dixon Line.

Such well-known agencies as the Industrial Home for the Blind in Brooklyn, New York, the New York Association for the Blind in New

York City, and the Massachusetts Association for Promoting the Interests of the Adult Blind (Massachusetts Association for the Blind) in Boston, came into being prior to or immediately after the turn of the century.

Pennsylvania, with approximately 34 counties, started the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind, which has service branches in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Harrisburg, etc.

In the 1930's religious-affiliated agencies, such as the Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant Guilds for the Blind, came on the scene.

Most of the agencies centered their services around case-finding--locating the blind persons within the community, where they lived, what their employment and recreational needs were and ways in which to meet them. Consideration was also given to what work ability they presently possessed. Blind clients were taken from the rural districts and brought into the cities which offered most of these services. So that transportation and housing would not be a problem, these blind persons were assigned living quarters in dormitories that were adjacent to the sheltered workshops where they were employed.

In the literature it is virtually impossible to find information that indicates just how many blind persons served on boards and what their impact was.

At the turn of the century, most boards had at least one blind person as a board member. Usually, this person would possess some prominence either as an author, or a teacher in a school for the blind within the local community or the state, or as a member of the clergy. It seemed that a token blind person was appointed to boards. However, some executive directors of private agencies did use blind persons for ascertaining service needs. These executive directors would, in turn, make these recommendations known to their boards. But, even then, these blind persons who were utilized by the executive directors tended to be, and were, generally supportive of administrative decisions and policies.

Several private agencies for the blind were started by individual blind persons who saw a need and then went after the people in their communities to help them try to fill it. Services at that time usually centered around braille transcribing, locating jobs for blind persons in factories, or just helping blind persons to obtain transportation so that they could attend church or synagogue.

Following this, advisory committees of blind persons were formed and they started to ask for more than sheltered shops--for more than just working with their hands.

If one reads some of the literature put out at the turn of the century, one would think that he was reading recommendations proposed by blind persons in 1976. They asked for: equality; courses in adjustment, especially in communication and mobility, since they wanted to function independently; job training and better jobs.

Individual blind persons or small groups would go to the executive director and make their needs known; then, he would present these recommendations to the board. In some cases the board would listen and try to implement these recommendations; in other cases the board felt that it knew more about what was needed and, therefore, would go its own way in establishing services.

Many times when a blind person is a board member he may speak for his own individual needs and not necessarily for the blind persons in the community. He may have complaints against society--his not getting an even break, or working in a job that he feels is beneath his capability--and he expresses his dissatisfaction in various ways as a board member. Other blind people make good board members--they can look objectively at the needs, recognizing not only their own, but what is generally needed by the blind persons within their communities.

In 1940, a small group of blind persons banded together in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and formed the National Federation of the Blind. This was the first organized group of blind persons in the United States on a national level.

In the early 1920's and 1930's most of the agencies were primarily hiring blind persons as staff members because they were blind. As agencies grew and became more professional they looked for professional qualifications in staff members and not necessarily blindness as the major qualification. If the blind person could read and write braille, he became the braille instructor; in some cases, he would assume the duties of a social worker and provide counseling to newly blinded persons. Many times their inability to obtain adequate employment opportunities within the community played a role in the employment of blind persons in private agencies. Most of them were outstanding, dedicated workers, who put in long work hours each day. Others were quite bitter about not being accepted in the general employment market and this bitterness and resentment would be displayed through their attitudes toward the clients they served.

If the executive director was blind, the board leaned upon him a great deal in order to find out about the real needs of the community.

A sighted executive director would talk over with his blind staff his ideas and recommendations and would seek help from them as to what some of the needs were.

Some of the blind individuals from the local consumer chapters were anti-agency and therefore referred to the blind staff members as "blind Uncle Toms."

There does not seem to have been a healthy relationship between many of the blind staff members of private agencies for the blind and some members of organizations of the blind, especially the National Federation of the Blind.

Many schools for the blind had their alumni who would meet on an annual basis. Most of the time it was a reunion, a get-together, but they would also talk business and make recommendations to the schools.

However, there were no alumni of agency clients per se. The National Federation of the Blind was the first opportunity, the first real chance, for a group of blind persons from all around the country to act as one and make their recommendations heard by the private agencies, the state agencies, the Federal, state, and local governments.

Presently, there are three major organizations of the blind in the United States: the American Council of the Blind; the National Federation of the Blind; and the Blinded Veterans Association. There are also scattered groups of parents of blind children; in certain states these parent groups are more active than in others. It is felt that there should be a National Association of Parents of Blind Children because they have something to say and, as an association, they would have a much stronger clout, especially in regard to legislation dealing with education and habilitation.

There are many blind individuals whose counsel is sought by directors and boards of private agencies. Usually, these persons are well-known in the community. Some may be former clients; others may just be prominent citizens.

Almost all of the private agencies for the blind have at least one blind person on their staffs; many have more. However, a great deal of an agency's hiring practice toward the employment of blind persons depends upon the attitude of its executive director.

In looking over the scant literature on the subject, I decided to write to 40 directors of private agencies for the blind to seek help--to ask for their evaluation of the blind person's impact on their agencies; and, also for their comments. I tried to pick the more established agencies and to have a good geographical spread. Of the 40 agencies I surveyed, I received 32 responses.

The questions I asked were:

1. How many board members does your agency have?

2. How many members of the board can be classified within the legal definition of blindness?
3. How were these members chosen?
4. Does the legally blind person represent himself or an organization of the blind?
5. How effective have the legally blind persons been to the board in representing consumer viewpoints?
6. Are any of the legally blind persons officers of the board?
7. Is there anything in the by-laws that states that your agency must have a certain number of legally blind persons as members of the board?

A tally of the 32 replies showed the following:

These agencies had a combined total of 823 board members. Membership ran from 3 on one board to 60 board members plus 18 ex officio members on another.

Eighty-nine, or approximately 10 percent of the membership of these boards were legally blind persons. Six agencies said that one-half of their board members were blind; another about one-third; but, the majority listed 3 as the magic number of blind representation. However, 6 said they had no blind board members--I wonder why?

In 24 agencies board members were chosen by names being submitted to a nominating committee; 6 by local consumer groups; and 2 agencies did not answer this question.

Of these legally blind board members, 71 represent themselves; 11 represent consumer groups; and in 7 cases there was no answer to this question.

Sixty-five of the legally blind board members were considered effective; this ran the gamut from excellent to very good. Twenty-four of these board members were considered ineffective through their indifference or limited input.

Only 15 of the 89 legally blind board members were officers of the boards.

In only 3 agencies did the by-laws state that an agency must have a certain number of blind persons as board members. Perhaps, this may be good for quota systems do tend to retard efficiency and effectiveness in service areas. However, it might be helpful to incorporate within an agency's by-laws a definitive plan concerning the use of blind persons.

Most respondents stated that although their boards did not have a high representation of blind persons, they did encourage appointment of blind persons to the advisory committees to the boards; by doing this, they believed that they were receptive to input from blind persons concerning services to be provided. One director talked about placing blind persons on advisory or sub-committees to the board to test their capacity and ability to function as board members. He did not state whether sighted persons were tested in this manner before receiving appointment to the board.

Another director stated that the board had a committee of consumers elected whereby monthly meetings, involving consumers, administration, and a board member, are held. This committee has submitted two reports to the board that have established policy. Both have been board approved and are now in the process of being implemented.

Another stated that although its by-laws did not specify inclusion of blind persons on its board, it did not feel a need for such specification since "appointment to the board depended upon the ability and not the disability of the person."

Another stated that even though the by-laws had no definite policy concerning the number of blind persons to be on the board, "emphasis has always been toward having an agency staff composed of more than 60 percent visually impaired." Still another agency stated that "it did not keep records concerning physical disabilities of its board members and therefore does not know how many of them may be legally blind."

Before we look at a blind person's impact on a private agency through his membership on the board, it might be well to define a board.

Basically, a board may be described as a group of persons having managerial, supervisory, or investigatory powers to develop and adopt policies that will provide the framework for an agency's operation. Board organization, therefore, should be developed around the elements that complement an agency, i.e.: administration, finance, personnel, program development, public and community relations. Responsibility of board membership is defined in official statutes, documents, constitutions and by-laws of an agency. However, the board may adopt its own by-laws to establish its rules and general procedures for committee appointments, assigning tasks, and conduct of its business. In all constitutional matters a board is responsible for carrying out the provisions and for facilitating an orderly revision of constitutions and by-laws.

A board is usually made up of prominent people from within a community who have a variety of disciplines--lawyers, businessmen, physicians, investment brokers, prominent women (authors, actresses, etc.), clergy, and local politicians. It is only recently that we have seen board members from psycho-social disciplines such as educators, social workers, psychologists, and sociologists.

Since blind persons today have a variety of educational and vocational experiences on the professional and business levels, there is absolutely no reason why they could not be appointed to boards of private agencies serving the blind. They would not only bring to the board their competency but, their blindness will act as a tool in educating sighted board members about the abilities of blind persons, and at the same time assisting these members to feel more comfortable in the company of blind persons.

With more than 1,000 well-educated blind persons graduating each year from our colleges and universities, there should be no hesitancy on the part of private agencies for the blind to reach out and seek their input in regard to setting agency policies; they have all the ingredients, plus their blindness, to provide good leadership on any board.

In attempting to assess the blind person's impact on a private agency through his membership on the board, it must first be determined why he was appointed; then, what he has to offer.

Appointment to the board should not be mere tokenism; instead, it should be because of his total adjustment to his blindness, how far he has advanced professionally and economically within his community in spite of his visual handicap, the respect he has earned as a person, and his overview concerning the improvement and the development of services now being offered by the agency to better the lives of all its blind clients.

A newly blinded person, even if he is wealthy, would have very little to offer insofar as improving services to blind persons, unless he has had prior rehabilitation assistance from an agency serving blind persons. Without total adjustment to his handicap, he may view the agency's needs subjectively, stressing mainly his own.

The blind person whose work and educational experiences have been limited fares badly as a member of a board, because the average board will not accept such a person on the peer level. It would be more advantageous to have such a blind person serve as a member of a sub-committee to the board.

A well-adjusted, competitively employed blind person who has gained recognition and respect will have an impact on the board of the private agency for they will more easily accept him as an equal

and recognize him as an individual and, thus, listen to what he has to say concerning services.

Attitudes play a major part in the acceptance of a blind person as a board member. Many times, boards and executive directors of agencies for the blind feel uncomfortable in talking about blindness when a blind person is present. This attitude may affect the decision of an agency to limit or exclude a blind person from board membership. To overcome this uneasiness, this discomfort, in relating to blind persons, in-service training programs should be adopted as company policy for new executive directors and board members. Through this type of training, each would be sensitized to the abilities and needs of the blind persons to whom they offer services.

No board or agency policy should be dictated directly by any one organization of the blind. Representatives from the various organizations of the blind should be afforded the opportunity to meet with the executive director of an agency and its board to express their views in regard to service needs. However, if a board or an executive director is forced to acquiesce to pressure asserted by such organizations, then the agency will lose its effectiveness as an entity and services for the blind will be circumvented.

This also holds true in relation to board members who may be sighted but who are parents of blind children. Unless they are able to see beyond the educational needs of their children, they may offer little to the development of services for all blind persons.

Following are recommendations that the author feels should be implemented if we are going to have good, solid input from blind persons to the private agencies for the blind in the United States:

1. The boards should follow the Federal government's guidelines on Affirmative Action. The directors should have a definite plan written into their by-laws explaining how they intend to use blind persons on their boards and committees.
2. Blind persons, in their home communities, should be given special opportunity to be trained in functioning as board members, if they are not already experienced.
3. Board members who are uneasy or uncomfortable in discussing when blind persons are present should have the opportunity to work through these feelings so that they become comfortable in discussing blindness with blind persons. (Seminars on this subject would help.) This will assist them to make more constructive recommendations in regard to the agency's direction concerning services for blind persons.

4. The executive director should make a strong effort to reach out to the blind persons in his community to seek their assistance in planning better services for blind persons.
5. The executive director of the private agency should make an honest effort to meet with local organizations of the blind in his community to ask for their help and recommendations.
6. Local organizations of the blind should make an honest effort to have a good on-going relationship with the private agencies for the blind.
7. The private agency should have vertical communication with staff in the agency. With this type of communication, the agency will function more as a team, providing it knows the agency's policy on consumerism.
8. The board should have periodic meetings with groups of blind persons in its community; the board presenting its policy and direction; the blind persons assisting with their comments and advice--this can lead only to better community services.
9. All board members should have a thorough orientation on blindness and the needs of the blind persons in the community.

A close working relationship between the private agencies for the blind, organizations of the blind, and individuals who are blind can only lead to better services. It will also lead to blind persons being recognized as individuals who are taking their rightful places as contributors within the community.

CITIZEN CONSUMER PARTICIPATION: A VIEWPOINT OF A NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION OF THE BLIND

By

Reese H. Robrahn

The governments of nations and societies of peoples in ancient times were universally power based and maintained; and their principal function was the collective protection and security of those who were citizens or members against the warring onslaughts of other peoples. Internal order was established and maintained for the most part through religious practices and social customs. Government services as we know them today were virtually nonexistent.

Provision for welfare aid and social services, until comparatively recent history, was the act of noblesse oblige. The gift of aid and assistance to the poor, to the lame, to the halt and to the blind, was not a responsibility of the government or of the officialdom of the community. The nobility, the aristocracy and the rich, in their beneficence, bestowed charities upon the "unfortunate and the afflicted," as the fruits of their generosity and in demonstration of the extent of their own good fortune and well-being. Some of this attitude towards aid and assistance for our fellow man in need still prevails, but much of it was dispelled during the years of the Great Depression of the 1930's.

The founding of the so-called Western democracy on this continent brought with it some acceptance of responsibility by government for the welfare needs of its citizens, but in those early years the major burden and role was carried by institutions such as the church, fraternal lodges, benefit associations and charitable institutions. In those early days population was sparse, communities were small, every man knew his neighbors and their fortunes and misfortunes. Initiative for help was not incumbent upon the person in need. His plight was an immediate concern of his neighbors and the community. This was best exemplified in the New England villages with their town meetings.

Two centuries have brought vast and far-sweeping changes in our nation and its peoples. Large urban areas are now commonplace. Fast and far-flung transportation systems have given greater mobility to our populations. Members of families are separated by great

distances, modes of work and manner of life styles. The term "neighboring" has lost much of its historical meaning and connotation. The governmental service systems have likewise greatly expanded into gigantic departments, agencies, offices, bureaus, boards, and commissions. The inevitable result is the impersonalization of not only the government and the institutions of the community, but the impersonalization of the day-to-day contacts and associations in the life of the individual.

The real impact and devastation of this impersonalization in our modern society is evidenced by and found in the anonymity of the millions of Americans who fall within the low-income groups. It is observed that these people are frequently without resources of their own, without family or friends to whom they may turn for help, without knowledge of the existence of available assistance and services from public agencies. They frequently appear to be lost, confused, frustrated, and to be without hope.

It is this aspect of the social scene of modern America, together with other social ills, that fomented and built up pressures until triggered by the events of the decade of the '60's, and which culminated in widespread acceptance and implementation of consumer participation.

Citizen involvement and participation in the affairs of government is in the best tradition of Western democracy. Consumer participation, in the context of this article, is viewed as but an extension or evolution of that tradition. If our system of democracy is long to survive in the environment and complexities of the space age or the age of technology, it is an absolute imperative that meaningful ways be devised and be put-in-place at all levels and in all aspects of governmental function to bring about full involvement and participation of its citizenry. The mere act of exercising the right to vote falls far short of what is required. There must be participation in the planning and policy-making of government at every level with regard to identification of needs and problems, solutions, implementation and delivery of the programs and services, outreach, follow-up and follow-along. If there continues to be substantial default in this, our system of democracy is doomed to fall far short in the fulfillment of its historical function and philosophical ideology, a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Edgar and Jean Cahn in "Citizen Participation" (Cahn, 1968) enunciated the following pertinent conclusions:

. . . participation, in and of itself, constitutes affirmative activity--an exercise of the very initiative, the creativity, the self-reliance, the faith that specific programs . . . seek to instill. Participation is, in fact, the necessary concomitant of our faith in the dignity and worth of the

individual. It is costly, it is time consuming, it is frustrating, but we cannot dispense with it.

While it is true that for many years in the field of work for the blind and visually handicapped, there has been practiced some forms of citizen or consumer participation and involvement, in some instances by legislative mandate, it must be concluded that such consumer participation and involvement for the most part has been advisory only.

It is contended by many that even where policy-making status was accorded to the blind consumer, it was mere tokenism, and that all too frequently selection of the blind citizen to fill positions on policy-making boards, commissions, and committees was conducted in a manner calculated to by-pass those who were leaders or representatives of organizations of the blind.

Moreover, it is contended by many that all too frequently the agencies established to provide services to the blind and visually handicapped have considered the principle of consumer participation as having been met and adequately discharged by the simple expediency of hiring a sprinkling of blind professionals to fill certain staff positions.

Having stated the foregoing, however, it would be less than objective to omit recognition of the fact that there have been some notable exceptions. During the last decade there has been a marked change in the attitude and posture of the professionals in the field of work for the blind and visually handicapped towards the demands of organizations of the blind for a greater voice and involvement in the planning and delivery of services to blind men, women and children. But acceptance of the principle of consumer participation by the field as a right belonging to those served by the field has not yet reached the point at which it may be said that it is general.

Professionalism is predicated upon the establishment, maintenance and upgrading of standards in the field of endeavor, standards in academics, work experience, continuing education, and in-service training and ethics. The very premise of lay consumer participation, that is to say, the right of the lay users of specialized programs and services, and those who fall within the eligibility group, to have a voice in the formulation of policies controlling the service system which plans and delivers the services to them, is wholly repugnant to professionalism.

The development of a comprehensive program and procedures for consumer participation in service systems serving the blind and visually handicapped has been slow and fraught with confusion and misunderstanding, and sometimes with a total breakdown in communication and interaction.

Pressures are ever increasing for recognition and implementation of the rights of the blind citizen consumer. These pressures constitute but a very small part of a much greater force of pressures that has been gathering and accumulating like flood waters behind a reservoir dam. These pressures have come from all corners of the land, from all strata of the structures of our society, and from all of its institutions, with civil rights at the center pole.

Industry and business sectors have long since led the way in consumer involvement. Competition in the market place and the profit motive incentive among commercial interests brought about an early realization of the need, desirability, and value of consumer involvement. That is to say that business sectors of our communities long ago developed, and are now utilizing, very elaborate and costly systems of involving consumers and prospective consumers of their goods, products and services, so that they might ascertain from them and assess what features, designs, and price tags will produce the greatest demand in the market place. Much may be learned from this source of experience.

Two conclusions become readily apparent from a study of the experience of utilization of consumers in the public and private sectors, which are most appropriate to consideration here. First, it is not only desirable but it is necessary that the consumers be associated together in formal organizations for collective action. Second, independence of the consumer organization is indispensable.

Some of the compelling considerations establishing the need for formal organizations of consumer populations are: (a) the organization provides a vehicle for a cross-section involvement of the group; (b) the organization provides a mechanism for confluence of viewpoint and consensus opinion; (c) the organization provides the mechanism for setting group goals; (d) the organization assures a continuity in attitudes towards the means adopted for the realization of goals; and (e) the organization provides the vehicle for the selection of representatives to the service system.

It is of paramount importance that the consumer organization remains independent and autonomous from the service system, because control of the consumer organization by the service system will produce only policies, plans, services and methodology which are conceived from the ingrown ideas, attitudes and philosophy of the administrators of the service system. Thus all justification for the consumer participation plan thereby, quite effectively, is nullified.

There is widespread experimentation with many forms and variations of consumer participation throughout the United States. The nature of the programs and services, the group to be serviced and the structure of the service system itself provide the variant

factors for an infinite variety of plans and procedures. It can be stated, however, that generally the following forms or combinations, or variations thereof, are utilized: (a) suggestion boxes, opinion sampling, and poll-taking; (b) establishment of advisory committees, boards and teams; (c) filling positions on policy-making bodies with representatives from the consumer groups in numbers ranging from nominal representation to controlling representation; and (d) placing ultimate and absolute control of planning and policy determination in the hands of the consumer group.

From a functional standpoint consumers may be utilized and integrated with the service system in four major areas:

(1) Services provided by the service system can be delivered by employees recruited from the consumer group served. This procedure has several obvious advantages. It provides gainful employment to some members of the consumer population for which there is frequently the problem of chronic unemployment. However, such employment opportunity should always be offered on the condition of formalized education or training so that the job holder may become better equipped to perform his immediate tasks and so that he may acquire the qualification and tools for advancement. The consumer employee may bring to the program a fresh perspective that cannot be fully appreciated by a non-consumer. His interaction, then, with other members of the consumer group may be more effective and may accomplish a greater acceptance of service programs. Such employment policy assures open lines of communication between the service system and those who comprise the consumer eligibility group.

(2) It may be appropriate to fund specific programs to be directed and staffed by the consumer organization. Again, this plan provides employment opportunities for some members of the consumer group; and in addition, it provides opportunity for the development of volunteer work projects for many of its members. It creates the atmosphere and facility for the introduction of innovations, and development of initiative and self-reliance; and it provides some real-life roles which tend to restore self-concepts that have been damaged or destroyed.

(3) If consumer participation is to be truly meaningful, representatives of the consumer group must be involved in planning and policy determination. This involvement must be more than tokenism, a gesture of good will and comradery. If the planning and policy-making body is not comprised entirely of consumer representatives, then, at the minimum, the proportion of representatives of the consumers must be sufficient in number to equalize or offset the weight of opinion and viewpoint of professionals representing the service system. It is of major importance in order to insure cross-section availability of representatives from the consumer population that the service system pay the necessary and

actual expenses of the members of these bodies; and it is highly desirable that a modest honorarium be paid also. The foregoing is especially appropriate where the consumer group has wide geographic distribution. The service system can be of inestimable aid to these lay planners and policy makers by furnishing materials to them well in advance of the time when such materials would be helpful in providing information relating to proposed plans and policy considerations.

(4) A program of advocacy is another appropriate function in which the consumer population may be involved. Advocacy at best is an expensive undertaking. Lack of funds puts it virtually beyond the reach of individuals comprising the consumer group. Even the well organized and adequately funded consumer group finds it not feasible financially to engage in an advocacy program. One approach to the solution of this problem is through the use of ombudsmen. This program provides advocacy for those who do not have the funds in the same way that the public defender program provides legal services to those who are charged with the commission of criminal offenses and who are without adequate funds to hire their own legal counsel. But perhaps the most appropriate plan would involve the funding of an advocacy office within the service system itself utilizing members of the consumer population to staff it. This plan offers the advantages of easy accessibility to the advocate office by the members of the consumer group, and ready accessibility of the advocate office to records and files and staff members of the service system.

On September 26, 1973 the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 became law. Section 504 of that Act, (29 U.S.C. 794), provides as follows:

No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States, as defined in section 7(6), shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

This statutory language is similar to that found in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq), and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq).

Obviously this Section prohibits the exclusion from participation in, the denial of benefits of any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance, and any discrimination under programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

It is the contention and belief of the American Council of the Blind, and of this writer, that the language of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, quoted above, is sufficiently broad to be subject to the interpretation that exclusion of any otherwise

qualified individual who is blind or visually impaired or the denial of participation to any otherwise qualified individual who is visually impaired, from service as a member of the governing bodies and/or councils, committees, boards, and commissions which plan and make policy for any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance is a violation of the Act. This contention and belief stated another way is that the prohibitions of the Section are not limited to physical access to a facility or structure nor to the services delivered by a program or activity, but that the prohibitions are all encompassing and pertain to participation in an enjoyment of the benefits of the planning and policy-making functions of the program or activity; and any exclusion or denial therefrom without a legally justifiable reason, constitutes a violation of the Act.

To summarize the contentions and belief of the American Council of the Blind as presented here, it may be stated that as a natural evolution of the tradition of Western democracy; that as a matter of pragmatism and practicality, and that as a matter of law, citizen consumers who are blind or visually impaired must be accorded the right to participate fully in all aspects of the operations and business and affairs of agencies, programs, or activities which provide services to them.

According to many students of sociology and political science this nation is now entering its age of social maturity. The events of the last decade have wrought in our citizenry a reawakening of its social conscience and sense of responsibility for well-being and self-attainment, one for the other. This phenomenon has manifested itself in the recognition and implementation of the principle and right of consumers' participation in the determination and administration of their affairs.

If the field of work for the blind and visually handicapped . fails to heed this sociological and political fact of life today, then most assuredly it will be guilty of and will have fallen prey to one of the very misconceptions commonly held by the public about blindness and its problems, i.e., that the blind are helpless and cannot achieve management of their own affairs nor attain their human potential by reason of lack of eyesight.

The American Council of the Blind regards the immediate implementation of the principle of consumer participation in the field of programs and services for the blind and visually handicapped, in its most full and true sense of meaning and definition, as the greatest and best hope for the success of the field, now and in the future, and for the survival as first-class citizens of those whom it serves.

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THE CHANGER AND THE CHANGED

By

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The problem of blindness is as old as society itself, and it is not too useful to dwell on that commonplace observation in a brief article such as this one. The ways in which various societies have attempted to cope with the problem of blindness throughout history are detailed in many sources. One of my favorites is Monbeck's "The Meaning of Blindness," 1973. A point seldom made, however, is one which I have come to believe in recent years: i.e., that blindness would be a problem for society, even if none of its members were blind, or significantly impaired in vision. It would still be a problem because it would still constitute a potential threat to everyone. The more important vision is, the more important is its loss, or potential loss, and so the problem of blindness is much more than the problem of some persons who happen to be blind. It is a deep and persistent threat in all of human life, independent of incidence or statistics of occurrence.

Nevertheless, some persons in every society are blind, or severely visually impaired. They constitute a problem for society in quite another sense, since their condition places them at a distinct disadvantage in fulfilling many of the roles expected of all persons: becoming educated, finding productive employment, raising a family, paying taxes, staying out of jail, etc. The economic arguments in favor of vigorous rehabilitation programs are well known, and have constituted important support for the rapid expansion of services to the blind since the last world war. It is quite simply a very cost-effective matter to change an unproductive member of society into a productive one. The benefits far outweigh the costs, especially given the prolonged life expectancy we enjoy in this society. Humane reasons are important too, of course, for we are a humane society.

It seems to me that most blind persons, like everyone else, want to fulfill all those roles expected of them by society: getting an education, finding productive employment, participating in family life, paying taxes staying out of jail, etc. In other words, their goals for themselves ought to correspond fairly well, on the average, with the goals that the larger society has for them. There

ought to be little difficulty in changing potentially dependent and unproductive individuals into potentially independent and productive ones, when the changers and the changed agree on the desired results and work together to achieve them. However, just as an individual's motives are not always social in nature, there appear to be some aspects of social life which do not always have the well-being of individuals as a primary goal. I believe the net result is that blind persons must themselves take a very active part in the process of rehabilitation, not only their own, but that of others as well. Social attitudes reflect not only the positive and humane components which we all know and appreciate, but some negative and injurious ones as well. Those must be dealt with, for they work contrary to the best interests not only of blind persons, but to society itself in the long run.

In what follows, I would like to discuss the relationship between the individual blind person and the social context in which services to the blind are offered to him. In doing so, I shall draw upon personal experiences and offer some speculations. I hope the reader will permit me to supply a few facts from my own rehabilitation experience as a frame of reference for some of the following material.

After a childhood with normal vision, I lost my sight in 1945 at age fifteen, in an accident which required several months of hospital care. During the year I was absent from school, my family and I were greatly assisted by a home-teacher, who not only shared specific skills and adjustment techniques, but provided our family's first experience with a real blind person. Toward the end of that year, after learning braille and typing, as well as indoor mobility, table skills, grooming, etc., I recall being assured of financial aid in higher education through an organization known only as "Vocational Rehabilitation." I was then asked to choose whether to finish my high school education by returning to my regular public school, or by attending a school for the blind, located some three hundred miles from home. I was later congratulated for making the tougher choice, returning to public school, but in fact I recall making what to me was obviously the easier choice, remaining at home with my family.

Not only did I graduate from high school in 1949, but I simultaneously became an actual client of that "Vocational Rehabilitation" agency, as I began my college education. Upon college graduation, I found a job in my home town typing from dictating equipment, and then became a "closure." I was unable to convert a "made-up" job into a genuine one at that first work setting, and left it after a few months. Then followed a period of self-employment, and a renewed interest in university training. I was accepted into a Ph.D. program in Psychology in 1954, and was also accepted by Vocational Rehabilitation again as a sponsored client. This time it worked, since graduate training was strongly

oriented toward apprentice professional activity, and I found student employment to be the key I needed in acquiring that all-important initial experience upon which later positions could be based. I gradually became less completely a client, and more completely a self-supporting citizen, and received my Ph.D. in 1960. The transition was gradual, and no date or event seems significant now in the process.

After working in a rehabilitation hospital for several years in various professional capacities, I decided to try to obtain a university position which involved teaching and research in a rehabilitation-related area. I spent two years studying computer programming and career aspects of computing for the blind, with Dr. Theodor D. Sterling. In 1969, I joined the faculty of the University of Kansas, and have been able to combine my interests in psychology, rehabilitation, and computing, in discharging my duties at that institution. I became eligible for a sabbatical leave from that university during 1976-77, and at present am spending that year visiting Carnegie-Mellon University's Psychology Department. Both the change in career direction in the late 1960's, as well as the year spent away from home in Pittsburgh, were crucial periods during which the support of services for the blind has been of major importance in enabling me to meet the various demands placed on me.

It has been said that we are living in an age of "consumerism," by which it is usually implied that a manufacturer, a branch of government, or some other provider of service, can hardly do a thing without first consulting its public or clientele. One rarely hears the term "consumerism" used by consumers themselves. Educational institutions have also been transformed by the inclusion of students in policy-making bodies at every level of governance. Having experienced that particular consumer revolution first-hand, I find its outcome a valuable one, despite the occasional strain with which the process is carried out. I have seen an increase in the level of responsiveness and responsibility of faculty members under the pressure of student access to the inner sanctums, and also a decline in the level of fear or the conviction that disaster is imminent, which was formerly a barrier to such student involvement.

In discussing the provision of services to the blind, it can also be seen that consumerism plays a role of some significance. In the sense that blind persons themselves have played a key role in services for the blind, one could argue that consumerism has been evident in this field for a very long time, and is not a particularly new or recent development. It is probably more instructive to ask whether the character of consumerism in services to the blind has been changing in quality lately, rather than in quantity. It is perhaps in just this respect that the role of the several membership associations of blind persons have assumed a high visibility in recent years. It is very important to articulate the needs of blind

persons, and present those needs in a systematic and effective manner, in order to influence providers of service, makers of laws, and the general public as well. There are clear parallels between consumerism in services to the blind and other mass movements in our society, including civil rights and the women's movement. Without minimizing the importance of organized efforts by blind persons to promote the general well-being of the blind, one can still identify equally important roles to be played by individuals who happen to be blind, without any regard to their roles as members of councils or federations of their fellow-blind.

It is important at this point to ask who is the changer, and who is the changed. In one sense, it can be said that society, through its agencies and laws, is the changer, and that the whole idea is to change blind persons by making them as able as anyone else to meet the ordinary demands of living in our society. In another sense, the blind themselves often assume the role of the changer, and strive to alter those agencies and laws to better meet their own needs, so that society is changed. It should not be surprising to find that both interpretations are correct, and that wherever "change" is attempted between people, the process is a two-way process in which the changer participates in the changes in ways he perhaps did not anticipate. To return again to the changes brought about when students insisted on sharing the decision-making mechanisms of their schools, there seems to me to be little doubt that high on the list of benefits which resulted from that effort were the changes which the student changers themselves experienced. In my own experience, I know of at least a score of graduate student representatives to our faculty meeting who learned very quickly that it was no great privilege or pleasure to participate in our goings-on. We at least demystified our processes, and I am afraid we produced an "is that all there is to it?" reaction, which is indeed a humbling experience for us faculty members. Perhaps other similar settings had different outcomes than my own.

The individual blind person, working outside the structure of the several membership associations, may never significantly affect a single piece of legislation, or other large public issue. Nevertheless, his daily contacts with persons in all walks of life provide him, and them, with a very powerful vehicle for mutual change. A special burden falls upon each blind person as a representative, in some sense, of all blind persons everywhere. That is often a very uncomfortable burden, and it surely does not hold in many close relationships. Each person has a portion of his life which is public, and in that area it does apply. This is a burden which is also familiar to blacks, to women, and to other self-conscious groups seeking equality for themselves. Much as we all value the right of each person to succeed or fail as individuals, failure as blind persons, black persons, or women is much more visible to the public.

Blindness is fundamentally different from other conditions which resemble it only in certain limited ways. It differs in that it is a potential or threatening condition for all persons. One does not "go black," or "go woman" (except very rarely, and then by one's own choice), but one may "go blind." That unspoken fact is a real problem for many persons, and it cannot help but influence the kinds of daily contacts which we, as blind individuals, have or fail to have with ordinary fellow human beings. It does not require too many instances of being talked about as though you were not present to figure out that something very strange is going on. In a recent move to another city I had to bone up on techniques for living alone, and for finding my way, physically as well as socially, in a totally new environment. The commonplace reluctance of most people to speak to a blind person acquired uncomfortable proportions for me for a time, and it became actually exhilarating when one beautiful sunny morning three persons actually said "good morning" as I was on my way to the office.

Unlike the associations, the individual blind person deals with the other members of society one at a time as individual persons. In fact, he does so whether he chooses to or not, and in ways which are not always of his own choosing. The transactions that take place in such one-to-one relationships are powerful determiners of two separate things. One thing which they determine is a somewhat more accurate public view of what at least some blind persons are like. Public education one-at-a-time is a slow process, but an important one, in which perhaps someone who offers assistance in crossing a street for the first time will be a little more comfortable or skillful in doing so again. Indeed, I believe it to be largely the responsibility of the blind person to assure that this positive outcome takes place, and not the opposite, by which the offer of assistance leads one to avoid the next blind person he encounters. I remember once gratefully thanking a dear little old lady who assisted me across a busy street, and informed me half way across that she knew just what it must be like, since she could hardly see anything herself. Truly a time for good cane technique.

The second area which is determined largely by the numerous inevitable daily transactions which each blind person has with other people, and which can be influenced only slightly by the various associations, is his own sense of self-confidence, or self-respect. There are many sources of input which mold one's self-concept, but perhaps most important among them is the concept which other persons hold of one. To the extent that ordinary folks have accurate ideas about one (or are at least open to acquiring them), then these influences are healthy and beneficial. However, to the extent that the attitudes of other persons are reflective of other factors, such as dimly realized emotional aspects of an obvious disability such as blindness, then there is risk that the blind person himself may be influenced toward adopting such misconceptions about himself. In

addition, it should not be forgotten that many blind persons were once ordinary sighted members of society, and may have experienced anxiety, fear, disgust, or other negative reactions concerning blindness. When persons with such problems in fact become blind persons, they have an especially difficult task to accomplish. That task is self-acceptance, and absolutely requires clear and positive inputs from other people to achieve.

Once again it might be asked whether we are able to say whether the individual blind person, in his ordinary interactions with others around him, is the changer or the changed. Once again, the answer is probably both. Each such individual has a powerful tool for affecting the ideas which at least some persons have about blindness, and is also subject to powerful influences toward adopting the attitudes which others have toward him as though they were truly his own. While many of the possible negative components of attitude toward blindness lead those who hold such attitudes to minimize their contacts with blind persons, there are two commonly observed negative elements worthy of special mention. My colleague, Beatrice A. Wright calls these elements, "anormalization," and "the requirement of mourning." The individual blind person has to recognize these and find a way to deal with them if he is to form and maintain healthy attitudes toward himself. He also has an opportunity which the associations do not have, to help persons who exhibit these problems to arrive at more accurate ideas about blindness.

The first of the problem areas, anormalization, is perhaps less troublesome than the other, but a problem nonetheless. It is named after the tendency of some persons to imagine that there are strong positive properties that go along with blindness, which have the effect of making the blind person better than normal, or superior in some far-reaching sense. It often takes the form of an absolute conviction that to be blind means also to have excellent memory, superior powers of concentration, extra-sensitive hearing and touch, amazing powers of insight into human character, remarkable senses of humor, a highly developed capacity to love, and even supernatural mental gifts and special religious qualities. Some readers may themselves be blind persons, and will surely have experienced the excessive praise for minimal behavior which often stems from this attitude. There are two unfortunate results of such adoration when it operates between the blind person and others with whom he interacts. First, it places considerable distance between the two, and adds strain and awkwardness to the relationship. After all, how does one remain friends with a saint, or with someone with such marvelous and awesome powers? The second possible consequence, of course, is that the blind person himself may come to believe all that nonsense about himself. What harm can there be in going along with others, when they make one out to be so super? The harm, of course, is that we do not live by image alone, and the ultimate test of our qualities must eventually take place in the real world. No doubt it is better to have mistakenly positive ideas

about oneself than mistakenly negative ones, but in the long run it is most important to have ideas about oneself which are not mistaken at all.

The other problem area, the requirement of mourning, is very prevalent and very difficult to manage. It operates as a very strong expectation by ordinary people that to be blind must carry with it an inevitable quality of mourning the loss of sight. Indeed, the expectation is so strong that some persons who hold this attitude are quite upset to find that this response is not always true, and will go to great lengths to preserve the belief that to be blind is to be miserable. The expression "how brave" is often a subtle clue that this attitude is operating. The "bravery" is often a nothing more nor less than the blind person showing a positive interest in something, or feeling pleased about something, or showing some kind of enjoyment. To exhibit those qualities, despite blindness, somehow gives away the belief that to be blind means to forever abandon any claim to simple direct positive experiences. The person who is blind sometimes acts unwittingly as a reminder to a person who is not blind that visual loss is real, it does affect some people, and perhaps everyone is subject to that loss. It is as though a person is saying, "I value my sight, and if I were to lose it like you, I would be overcome by grief and sorrow, just as you must surely be, in every moment of your existence." How brave indeed, then, not to play this terrible game.

There was a time in the history of psychological counseling when some professionals practiced a very simple little mental trick which relates to the notion of requirement of mourning. Happily, this practice is now extinct in all but the rarest of professional environments. The trick is to divide all things into two categories. A client is either a "typical X" or else he is exhibiting "denial of X." There is nothing in between. Furthermore, "X" can be most anything. Masculinity, femininity, heterosexuality, homosexuality, castration, depression, disability, all these and more have appeared in the formal or informal literature. What was usually meant was that a client either exhibits, or fails to exhibit, the preconceptions one holds in a certain area of human functioning. If he does exhibit what you think he should, then your ideas are safe, and the client is explained. However, if he does not exhibit the characteristics you expect him to, then he is clearly manifesting "denial of X," and once again your ideas are safe and the client is again explained. Unfortunately, this mental trick persists in many areas of ordinary thinking by people in all walks of life, and here of course I include blind and sighted persons alike. The terminology may not be used, but it operates just the same. This is the sense in which the "requirement of mourning" is a very difficult attitude to change. It is hard to convince persons who hold such attitudes in an extreme degree that there may be some other possibilities besides the two obvious ones, of acting defeated by one's blindness, or else exhibiting remarkable bravery despite being truly defeated deep

down. Oscar Wilde once pointed out that there are two classes of people in the world. There are those who divide all things into two classes, and those who do not.

There is a growing sense among workers with disadvantaged groups in our society that a significant portion of the disadvantage is derived from social barriers, and negative public attitudes. The two processes discussed above, anormalization and the requirement of mourning, are two ways in which social attitudes can operate to worsen the handicapping aspects of the loss of sight. I do not mean to imply that one only finds negative attitudes held by the public, or by persons with normal vision. If that were so, we would not be sharing ideas through these pages, and the lives of hundreds of thousands of blind persons would be significantly different than they are today. My own career as a teacher and researcher would have been impossible without the generous and positive aid extended to me by the various agencies who serve the blind, and by ordinary persons in all walks of life whose assistance and friendship I have enjoyed. It is jointly the responsibility of the various associations of blind persons, and of the many individuals who happen to be blind, to sift out the positive from the negative, to promote the one and try to change the other, and not to be deceived into the illusion that all is love and roses, nor that all is rejection and despair. There is enough of both around to make it important, and worth our while, to make the distinction as carefully as we can.

There is clearly an important role to be played by various membership associations in the design and provision of services to the blind. I play an active part in my state association, as well as organizations in bowling and beep-baseball for the blind. However, it is also my firm conviction that each of us who is blind can generate some very powerful forces supporting our collective welfare, and also have the opportunity to try to remedy some troublesome elements in our lives together. I once overheard a very serious theory being propounded in a local Kansas establishment, concerning the origins of tornados. They were due entirely, according to one patron, to the opening of interstate turnpikes and super highways in recent years. To support his view, he carefully explained that tornados were nothing more nor less than enormous concentrations of counter-clockwise swirls of air. He claimed that these concentrations were the inevitable result of the accumulation of millions upon millions of tiny counter-clockwise swirls, created between the lanes of traffic headed in opposite directions on our highways. Since we drive on the right, according to this theorist, cars which pass on the highways at high speeds are the ultimate origin of tornados. He also noted that the incidence of tornados has decreased in the several years since the lowering of the speed limit to 55 miles per hour. I suppose my own argument in favor of the constructive role for the individual in enhancing the welfare of all blind persons resembles the turnpike theory of tornados, though I hope it possesses sounder logic.

Finally, I would like to state once more my belief that what happens between people when one person tries to change another is necessarily a two-way street. There are caveats in this statement for both sides of the process in the area of services to the blind. Consumers of such services rightly feel the need to fully participate in the change process. The providers of those services are initially the changers, inasmuch as it is some change for the better in the lives of their clients which is their goal. However, they too have recognized the need for input from their clientele and the need for feedback. The most progressive aspects of those services are just those aspects which have been open to the possibility of being changed by the very process of providing services to others. The process of change, which is what rehabilitation is all about, is by its very nature a two-way process that takes place between individuals. This is why the role of the individual is such a crucial one in the preservation and enhancement of what we have accomplished together.

CHALLENGES TO THE CONSUMER'S ROLE

IN FEDERAL LEGISLATION

By

John Duncan

Surely the Federal government touches the lives of blind persons, for better or for worse, more thoroughly and more frequently than it does the lives of most other citizens.

Consider the conglomeration of Federal programs, services and benefits for the estimated 484,000 blind persons in the United States, from the Social Security disability insurance program providing direct benefits to some 117,000 blind persons, the Supplemental Security Income program assisting 75,000 individuals in the blindness category alone, the vocational rehabilitation program currently rehabilitating about 28,000 blind and severely visually impaired individuals a year, the Randolph-Sheppard program providing self-employment for nearly 4,000 individuals, the special marketing preferences under the Wagner-O'Day Act for sheltered workshops providing vocational training for some 5,000 blind persons, the range of free or low-cost health benefits under the Medicare, Medicaid and Veterans Administration programs, the education and pension benefits of Veterans Administration programs serving blinded veterans and their families, and the special postal, taxation, travel and library privileges for blind persons. One may conclude, regardless of how he feels about the adequacy or success of these Federal programs, that the blind are indeed a special class of citizens--one for whom the concept of a social welfare state has been most realized.

Much of this legislation was enacted well before national organizations of the blind arose and rallied, much later, under the banner of "consumerism."

To chart the origins of Federal legislation, in any area, through the various political intrigues of personal acquaintances, persuasions and influences is a hazardous endeavor; an endeavor that can produce a distortion of history by giving credit solely to one outspoken man or a group of such men when many persons, remaining unknown, contributed to the formulation of legislation. Furthermore, many of the movers and shakers of Congressional power

prefer, for many reasons, to remain silent and, consequently, their roles are known, perhaps incompletely, by only a small band of insiders.

Nevertheless, for anyone wishing to pursue the history of Federal legislation for the blind, I can offer two basic rules:

Rarely does Congress initiate legislation from its own well of deliberation. It acts primarily only after being urged to do so.

The names of Congressional sponsors of legislation and the names on the laws rarely reflect the true origins of our laws and the identities of the individuals who conceived them.

So it has been in legislation for the blind.

To give a few brief examples (Koestler, 1976); on the origins of the Social Security Act:

As originally drafted and introduced into Congress in January 1935, the Wagner-Lewis bill, then called the Economic Security Act, contained not a single reference to blindness.

'A few days ago we were studying the Wagner-Lewis Economic Security Act,' Robert Irwin wrote to M.C. Migel on February 13, 1935, 'and quite to my surprise I found it contains one section which provides that the Federal Government will match dollar for dollar money appropriated in the various States for carrying on work for crippled children.' Why, Irwin went on, should not similar help be extended to the blind? . . .

'We had a brief hearing yesterday,' Irwin reported, 'but I do not think we will get anywhere unless we can get Wagner or some other member of the Finance Committee sufficiently interested to sponsor the matter vigorously when the Committee goes into executive session.' Would Migel be willing to write his good friend, Robert F. Wagner, about it?

Migel, who was in Palm Beach, dashed off a characteristic response: 'It is useless to write to any Senator--one has to see them.' He would be back within a week or so and would willingly go to Washington for that purpose.

Migel's trip to Washington bore fruit when the bill was reported out by the Senate Finance Committee. It now contained a brand new section, Title X, that established aid to the blind as a separate assistance category.

On the origin of the Randolph-Sheppard program:

The Bill, H.R. 5694, was introduced by Matthew Dunn of Pennsylvania, then serving his maiden term in Congress. Dunn, a graduate of the Overbrook School for the Blind

The bill's most vigorous advocate was a blind Cleveland lawyer, Leonard A. Robinson, who headed a statewide organization of blind people. He was known to have drafted the Dunn bill. . . .

One can continue with the chronicle of Federal legislation for the blind, but the important lesson to be gained from such history is that blind leaders, whether in organizations of the blind or professional organizations in various fields, have succeeded by allying with sighted workers for the blind and influential leaders. A narrow and exclusive adherence to "consumerism" will not win the day.

And what has been the impact of that Federal legislation on the blind? From one viewpoint, it has enabled thousands of blind persons to gain employment, live independently, and have a better standard of living. But from another viewpoint, it has meant that the blind have been thought of and treated as wards of the State, patronized, protected, and rehabilitated to conform to the needs of the State, without having a voice in its processes.

What we are witnessing today among some of the blind is a wider acceptance of that latter viewpoint, and with that, comes an awakening--which other groups of citizens may someday have to face--that leads to a struggle against the social welfare state, and the attitudes, both about themselves and from society, which are engendered by such social welfare legislation.

Whether blind persons, in organizations or acting alone, seek emancipation from that system or greater participation in it, their efforts are broader than consumerism; "consumerism" is too narrow and imprecise a word to assign to the struggle of the blind to shape, rather than be shaped by, the complex, and frequently contradictory, forces they encounter in society. There is also a certain beguiling innocence associated with the word "consumerism" that imbues its advocates with the illusion that the millenium of social justice can be attained if only the voice of the consumer is heeded. That voice, however, must be better informed, more prone to speak with expertise rather than emotional rhetoric or its impact will not be effective in reforming that vast array of Federal programs already in place that has contributed heavily to the making of blind persons. For there are harsh new realities which need to be better addressed.

That assembly of ultimate consumers, the taxpayers, is dissatisfied with higher public expenditures for special interests, that never seem to include their own; this dissatisfaction is being

articulated more frequently in the election of fiscally conservative politicians of both major parties, and the rejection of costly and unproductive public services. In an economy that can afford higher expenditures for special programs, services, benefits and privileges for its minorities, taxpayer jealousy is not as easily aroused. However, ours is a society adjusting to the idea of scarcity, and the voice of the ultimate consumer is louder. From air bags in automobiles to reduced air fare for the disabled, the ultimate consumer and his representatives in Congress and the Administration no longer accept proposals from consumer advocates for environmental protection, special accommodations for the few--whether poor or wealthy--or altruistic Great Society programs without measuring the potential benefits along with the costs and disadvantages.

Washington--the source of major funding for most of the special programs for the blind--is today, and will likely remain, for some time, a city of public administration and accounting graduates who use cost-benefit analysis techniques to master the strings of the public purse, or, frequently, to justify political pressures to loosen those strings. And, in the years ahead, we will likely hear more than we care to about "zero-based budgeting," a concept espoused by President Carter, which means that every dollar, down to zero, which is requested for a program must be rigorously justified anew at each appropriation time by reference to the "mission" of that program.

The Congress itself has instituted rigid internal procedures for controlling the Federal budget, and the Office of Management and the Budget in accordance with executive Order 11821 requires all proposed Federal programs and regulations to be reviewed for their inflationary impact.

Proposed regulations to implement a provision of the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973" designed to prohibit discrimination against the handicapped by those agencies which receive Federal funds, for example, were no exception to this requirement, although essential human rights for equality were involved.

Fortunately for us the Founding Fathers did not see the need to weigh the costs of the "Bill of Rights." But thanks to the Public Research Institute, a division of the Center for Naval Analyses, we now know assuredly that although the costs of ending discrimination against the handicapped by those who receive Federal funds is \$2.4 billion a year, the benefits are \$2.1 billion a year. In the words of the Institute's inflationary impact statement this leaves "a pecuniary cost deficit of only \$.3 billion per year to be balanced against psychic benefits. This is the reason for our above conclusion on the near favorable balance even without adding in psychic benefits."

Numerous examples can be given of how blind and disabled individuals and organizations of and for the blind and other disabled individuals have failed over the past several years to secure greater Federal involvement and expenditure for needed reforms.

To whichever villain one assigns the blame for the failure to enact a comprehensive rehabilitation program for elderly blind and disabled citizens, of a national health insurance program that covers the cost of long-term care for the blind and disabled, and of a program to end employment discrimination against the blind and enable them to earn their way to independence, the fact remains that the faces of 484,000 blind "consumers" were less sympathetic than those of millions of unemployed or low-income workers.

In short, the "psychic benefits" of assisting the disadvantaged and the disabled to arise from dependency, and any appeals to society's compassion, have not entered into the rigorous equations of scarcity.

For example, the average taxpayer was likely to be indignant after having read an Associated Press dispatch, printed in the Washington Post on December 28, 1976, which led off:

Almost \$215 million in food stamp benefits were paid in the first six months of 1976 to persons who were not eligible to get stamps or were paid more than they were supposed to get, the Agriculture Department said yesterday.

The impression conveyed was one of tremendous fraud, however, if the reader bothered to finish the article and carefully analyzed the facts it contained--although presented in a disjointed fashion--he would discover that the "fraud" accounted for about only four percent of this program's massive annual budget, that nearly half of the "fraud"--\$105.4 million--was in the form of overpayments to poor persons--some 1.8 million--who were already eligible for the benefit but received "too much." That, "too much" averages out to slightly less, than \$60 per person for the six month period!

Thus in the cause of controlling the budget even the slightest excess in generosity to the poor is labeled a "fraud," and in that same cause, as well, programs serving the poor and disabled must not only be cost-effective but their cost-benefit justification must be accurate, or else they too may be labeled "frauds."

In the past year, the Social Security disability insurance program which directly benefits approximately a quarter of the blind population in the United States was the object of renewed scrutiny from Congress and its budgetary watchdog, the General Accounting Office, due to rising expenditures, and variances in disability determinations.

One aspect of the program, the Beneficiary Rehabilitation Program, under which Social Security trust funds are used to pay the full costs of vocational rehabilitation for certain recipients of disability insurance, was the object of a General Accounting Office report entitled, "Improvements Needed in Rehabilitating Social Security Disability Insurance Beneficiaries." The report claimed that the program had been only marginally successful in saving Social Security trust funds, that vocational rehabilitation service was the factor responsible for only 38 percent of the 350 cases of benefit termination it examined, and that the Congress should change the method of financing the program to one tied to demonstrated success in reducing the number of individuals on the disability insurance rolls.

Whether the GAO report sufficiently understood the nature of the vocational rehabilitation program can be debated, but one conclusion to be derived from the entire report and its timing is that even those programs for the disabled that can measure their benefits in economic terms are just as susceptible to termination as those which can vaguely claim only certain "psychic benefits."

There is another nemesis aside from scarcity which is stalking our governmental corridors today; it is the son of scarcity and it is called by various names, "New Federalism," "Revenue Sharing," "Bloc Grant," "Integration and Coordination of Services," "Allied Services," and "Umbrella Agency." However the concept is called, it has only a few fundamental principles: Public services to restore dependent individuals to independence, dignity and economic self-sufficiency are fragmented among many units and agencies of government, all with different and, frequently conflicting, Federal requirements and regulations.

This fragmentation results in both the client's confusion about where to obtain services and inefficiency, needless waste of finances, duplication and excessive administrative requirements for State and local governments. The solution: to grant State and local governments greater flexibility in designing ways to serve their citizens. Since these governments better know the needs of their citizens than the distant Federal government and Congress in Washington, States and localities should not be hamstrung by Federal laws and regulations which detail how and for what purposes Federal tax dollars should be spent. Additionally, those governments should be encouraged to pursue reorganization of their human services programs under one master agency where administrative, planning, and program costs are shared.

These concepts are rapidly being implemented across the nation, since they are attractive not only to governors, State public welfare administrators, social workers, but I suspect, to the public in general. Where there were once many State commissions for the

blind responsible directly to the governor, there are now only 10; where there were once separate vocational rehabilitation agencies with high-level divisions for the blind, there are now multi-purpose human service agencies where the functions for services to the blind are buried under many organizational layers.

When such a reorganization plan in the general vocational rehabilitation agency was attempted in Florida, the American Foundation for the Blind joined in a judicial action as an amicus curiae to prevent the reorganization, arguing as it has in the past on numerous occasions that unless there is a governmental focus specifically centered on services to the blind, and preferably at a high level, with direct authority over budget, personnel, policies and program, the blind are unlikely to receive the special constellation of services they require.

When hearings were held before the U.S. House Select Subcommittee on Education, during May and July of 1975 on the Nixon Administration's, "Allied Services Act of 1974," the American Foundation for the Blind, the National Rehabilitation Association, and the National Association of Retarded Citizens opposed the legislation on the basis that unless Federal laws and regulations specifically instruct States to serve the blind and other handicapped persons, such individuals with unique needs are likely to be overlooked and inadequately served by social service personnel with no special training in serving the disabled.

Although rejected by the Congress, the concept of allied services continues to survive. As recently as December 6, 1976, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare published in the Federal Register proposed regulations entitled "Waiver of Departmental Requirements Impeding Improvements of Human Service Delivery by State and Local Governments" embodying all the principles of allied services legislation.

In its preamble to the proposed regulations, the Department noted:

For several years both the Congress and the Executive Branch of the Federal Government have attempted to strengthen the role of State and local governments in the Federal grant-in-aid system. The express purpose of legislation such as General Revenue Sharing, Comprehensive Employment and Training, Housing and Community Development, and Title XX of the Social Security Act is to increase State and local authority and responsibility for the planning and delivery of governmental services. In the area of human services, this Department is committed to assisting State and local general purpose governments in their efforts to improve planning and management activities.

State and local governments themselves have initiated significant reforms both in strengthening the role of their elected officials and in reorganizing government to deliver services more effectively. In over half of the 50 States, health and welfare programs formerly located in separate departments have been consolidated into Departments of Human Resources or similar umbrella-like agencies. Other States have created vehicles for better coordination and delivery of services by instituting human service policy councils under the leadership of the governor. Similarly, organizational changes and new techniques for service delivery have been adopted in many city and county governments as mayors, city managers, and county commissioners increasingly recognize the importance of their roles in improving the efficiency and effectiveness with which human services are delivered.

As noted in that preamble, General Revenue Sharing, Title XX of the Social Security Act, and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act--and I would add, the Health Planning and Resources Development Act--all embody the principle of local and State decision-making free of rigid Federal requirements--such as those upon which most of the network of Federal laws and categorical programs affecting the blind are based.

Indeed, the idea of categorical programs specifically designed by Congress for specific groups of citizens and specifically funded for only those purposes is waning. Where there was once a separate program under the Social Security Act for social services for the blind, there is now a social services program administered on the State and local levels for all disadvantaged and poor persons under which the blind and their allies must compete with other groups for the scarce resources to serve their constituents.

Yet the laws mentioned above provide substantial opportunity for citizen participation in decisions on how funds shall be spent.

The "Health Planning and Resources Development Act," (Public Law 93-641), which establishes a nationwide system of 200 local public, or non-profit private, agencies responsible for reviewing health care in their areas, contains a requirement that consumer representatives be appointed as members of the planning bodies.

The "Comprehensive Employment and Training Act," (Public Law 93-209), contains similar requirements for the composition of the planning councils of prime sponsors of manpower programs and of the State Manpower Services Council.

The Social Services Amendments to the Social Security Act, Title XX, (Public Law 93-647), contains requirements for citizen

participation, such as in public hearings on State Comprehensive Annual Social Services Program plans, and on Social Services Advisory Committees.

And in the case of the revenue sharing law, the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Amendments of 1976, (Public Law 94-488), grant wide opportunities for citizen participation ranging from the requirements for public hearings on Planned Use Reports, which detail how governments plan to spend their allocations, to new nondiscrimination provisions which permit blind and other disabled persons to seek judicial remedy on their own behalf if they believe revenue sharing funds are being used to support programs which discriminate against them.

These kinds of laws following the principle of "New Federalism" are likely to continue in other areas under the Carter-Mondale Administration, and since they offer both problems and promises for the field of services to the blind, consumer and professional organizations in the blind community must learn to make them work for the blind. These laws offer no unique treatment for the blind, no prime directives to State and local governments that the blind should receive a certain percentage of funds for their programs, yet they do not rule out such treatment.

We hear much dialogue about the unmet needs of the blind, specifically of those individuals on the age spectrum unserved by vocational rehabilitation, of the need for better health services for blind persons with continuing medical impairments, such as diabetes, and of the need for improved employment training programs. But I submit that if the blind and their allies participated more fully at the local and State levels on the citizen advisory committees and other organizations established by the laws described above, many of those needs could be met without additional Federal legislation.

These then are the two major governmental challenges the "consumer movement"--and the various professions, as well--in the blindness community must meet:

Budgetary policies and techniques which threaten those programs for which savings to the taxpayer cannot be convincingly demonstrated, and

The trend toward integration of services which threatens the delivery of services tailored for unique populations and blurs the focus of responsibility for such services.

The successful reply to these challenges, at the least, should include:

Procedures for identifying and conducting objective social research relevant to the administration and benefits of public programs for the blind,

Distribution of such research data and analyses of laws and proposed legislation to both consumers and professionals organized for political action at all levels of government,

Emphasis on cost-effective legislative proposals which truly promote independence rather than unwarranted dependence by blind persons on wasteful welfare programs, and

Participation at the State and local level by blind persons, speaking both as consumers and professionals, and their allies in action committees which should strive to shape, for the benefit of the prospective blind client, those "New Federalism" programs which come out of Washington unresponsive to the unique needs of blind persons.

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THE BEST OF THE PAST FOR THE PRESENT:

NUMBER ELEVEN OF A SERIES

OF REPRINTS



John Metcalf

JOHN METCALF

INTRODUCTION

By

C. Warren Bledsoe

Blind people the world over have a special pride in other blind individuals who have "gotten there on their own." By this is meant those who have made their marks without benefit of special education and rehabilitation, but by dint of mother wit and native genius. Perhaps the charm of such worthies lies in the hope that they fore-shadow a society so civilized that there remains no need for any segregating procedures whatever.

Yet, as was demonstrated in the last BLINDNESS ANNUAL by Dr. Bethold Lowenfeld, we move paradoxically toward the goal of integration through a multiplicity of special programs. The result is that it is increasingly difficult to cite in our own time rugged blind individuals who have not received some kind of service designed by the community to help overcome the handicap of blindness.

Though we can hardly regret this, we continue to be exhilarated by examples of individuals who have found their own original ways of dealing with obstacles, even blindness. On every count John Metcalf* qualifies as such a being. His career began in 1717, which was 70 years before Valentin Haüy founded the first school for the blind in Paris. It is not necessary to prove that he received no assistance from specialists on blindness. There were no such specialists in his young days. John Metcalf's life, documented by John Bernard Mannix, has been chosen this year for the "Best of the Past" section of BLINDNESS ANNUAL partly because it is a classic example of independence unadulterated by helping professionals.

But there is also specific fascination for modern workers for the blind in the portrait he caused to be drawn and left behind him. We see him holding high in his hand, actually seeming to brandish, a long cane, indeed one which reaches up to his hat. Surely this must have been his subtle message to the future, 200 years before Dr. Richard Hoover discovered "the long cane." And the message deciphers, "There is no magic. There is a commonplace explanation for everything."

But we can demur to the extent of saying, "Except the human spirit."

* Excerpts from the story "John Metcalf: 'Blind Jack' of Knaresborough." This is a narrative included in Heroes of the Darkness by J. B. Mannix (London: S. W. Patridge & Co., 1911).

JOHN METCALF:
"BLIND JACK" OF KNARESBOROUGH *

By

J. B. Mannix

The eighteenth century in England, as in most European countries, was a time of change and unrest, of wars and rumours of wars, of territorial expansion and growing commercial activity. It was, too, a picturesque period, alike in costume, manners, and personalities, and none the less so because of its contrasts. Those spacious, leisurely days, when Beau Nash lorded it in Bath, appeal to the imagination, as do the vicissitudes and romantic adventures of Charles Edward in quest of a crown. But Bath was not then the sole resort of the élite, nor was the Young Pretender the only adventurer. At the fashionable routs and assemblies in one of the famous "Long Rooms" at Harrogate, standing out against the elegant and lightly moving throng, might have been seen in "the forty-five," or thereabouts, a tall, well-built young man--clad in sombre grab, and with a strong, manly face, but a passive and somewhat wistful expression--who played the violin. Those among the gay company whose attention he attracted, and they were many, discovered that he was blind. Yet, very shortly afterwards, the visitor to the Harrogate of those far-off Georgian days might have seen the same young man, resplendent in a uniform of buff and blue, stepping out bravely at the head of a company marching to join Wade's army, and help to crush the Rebellion of 1745. This young man was no other than the famous and redoubtable "Blind Jack" of Knaresborough.

"Blind Jack," or, to give him his proper name, Jack Metcalf, was one of the most remarkable figures of his time. Sightless as he was from an early age, he was one of the keenest of sportsmen, equally good at games or riding, driving or walking, joking or talking. In a word, he was one of the best of good fellows. He was well known on the rugged roads of the north country, over which he rode or drove his own horse, or tramped, long crook in hand, for many years. But it was his splendid work as the first really great maker of roads in England that has given him the title to an enduring fame.

Metcalf was a scion of the hardy north, a son of the bracing Yorkshire moorland. He was born on the 15th of August, 1717, of humble parentage. His native place was that strikingly picturesque old West Riding town of Knaresborough, nestling in the deep and gorge-like valley of the Nidd, and overlooked by the ruins of the ancient

*From Heroes of the Darkness, by J. B. Mannix (London: S. W. Partridge & Co., Ltd., 1911).

castle. There, in that little, old-world town, with its steep streets and huddled houses, its weird memories of Mother Shipton and the hidden crime of Eugene Aram, little John Metcalf first saw the light. There was nothing sombre or gloomy about him from his earliest infancy. In his case the child was emphatically father to the man, and he rapidly grew into a bright, sturdy little fellow, full of activity and daring, and overflowing with animal spirits.

When four years of age little Jack Metcalf was duly sent to school. He attended school for two years, but at the end of that period he contracted smallpox. As so often happened in those days, the dreaded scourge attacked the eyes, and despite all that could be done, deprived the sturdy little boy of his sight. Young Metcalf's physical development, however, was not in the least degree hampered by his affliction. He came, in fact, to be probably the most striking example of the exuberance of physical vigour and animal spirits in the annals of the blind. As in youth he was one of the first in the field of manly sports and pastimes, so in later life he distinguished himself by his success, despite his affliction, in whatever field of activity he chose to exert his indomitable energy.

Within six months after his recovery from the smallpox he was able to feel his way from his father's house to the end of the street, and to find his way back without a guide, and before he was nine he could be sent alone on messages to any part of the town. Young Jack grew into a strong and healthy lad, and began to associate with other boys of his own age. He took part in all their pranks, including bird-nesting and robbing orchards, and soon became an expert climber, being able to scale any tree he could grasp. He used to ramble into the fields and lanes alone, and got to know the country round about Knaresborough intimately.

About the age of thirteen he was taught the violin, so that he might obtain a living as a strolling musician, then considered as the sole occupation open to a blind man. As a musician he attained a fair degree of proficiency. But his father kept horses, and Jack was more eager to learn to ride than to play the fiddle. He soon acquired the knack of managing a horse, and having plenty of nerve he generally rode at a gallop. The blind lad's exploits were the talk of the countryside. His untiring activity, his absolute fearlessness, and his acuteness of sense amazed everyone who came into contact with him. Of course he did not always go scot-free. He learned caution, but never knew the meaning of fear.

"Blind Jack," as he was now familiarly called, learned to swim when he was about fourteen years of age, and became quite an expert swimmer. With a fearlessness which in a blind lad amounted to heroism, he dived into the Wharfe on one occasion, and was instrumental in saving the lives of three of his companions who were in imminent danger of drowning. Again, in 1731, when two men were drowned in the deeps of the river Nidd, Metcalf was employed in the

gruesome task of searching for their bodies, and succeeded in bringing up one of them. On another occasion a friend of his, named Barker, a linen manufacturer, carried two packs of yarn to wash at the river. All at once they were swept away by a sudden flooding of the stream, and carried through the arches of the bridge. The yarn sank a little farther down, in a still pool which was in places about twenty feet deep. Metcalf promised to recover the yarn for his friend. The latter seemed rather doubtful of his ability to do so. The blind man, however, procured some long cart ropes, fixed a hook at one end, and leaving the other to be held by some friends on the high bridge, he descended, and by degrees recovered the whole of the yarn.

At the age of twenty-one, this stalwart son of the West Riding was extremely robust, and stood fully six feet one and a-half inches in height. He was of splendid physique and indomitable pluck. Nor was he lacking in a rollicking sense of humour. Returning one day on foot from a distance, he had proceeded about a mile, when he was overtaken by a Knaresborough man on horseback, who proposed, for a consideration, to let him ride in turn, dividing the distances equally. Metcalf agreed, provided that he should have the first ride. The other assented, but only on condition that he (Metcalf) should ride a little beyond a certain field, where he would see a gate on his right hand, to which he should fasten the horse. Metcalf, however, rode right on to Knaresborough, seventeen miles from the place where he left his fellow traveller. The latter on his arrival was greatly annoyed at being obliged to walk so far, but Metcalf pleading in excuse that he never saw the gate, the man was compelled to join in the laugh at his own expense.

Metcalf was an inveterate wanderer, and while still a young man he had travelled and "seen," as he termed it, a good deal of his native country. He travelled one year on horseback to Whitby, whence he sailed to London. He took his violin with him, and by its aid was able to earn enough to maintain himself for several weeks in the metropolis. He returned to Whitby, and then went to Newcastle to "see" some friends, and on to Sunderland, where he again supported himself by his violin-playing. Once more back to Whitby for his horse, he rode alone by Pickering, Malton, and York, over very bad roads, most of which he had never travelled before. When he approached York in the middle of the night, the city gates at Middlethorp were closed. Metcalf soon ascertained that they were made of heavy timber, with spikes on the top. He unbuckled the reins off his horse, threw them over one of the spikes, pulled himself up, and managed to get safely over. Then opening the gates from the inside he led his horse through. He got back to Knaresborough without further adventure.

After spending the winter at Harrogate as usual, he was off to London again the following year. This time he was accompanied by a friend who played the small pipes. Metcalf roamed about London and its environs, visiting Maidenhead and Reading, and such places of interest as Windsor Castle and Hampton Court. When the time came

for his return to Harrogate, a Colonel Liddel, of Ravensworth Castle, near Newcastle, whose acquaintance he had made, and who was also about to set out for Harrogate: offered Metcalf a seat behind his coach. Metcalf declined his offer with thanks, remarking that he could drive, and that he preferred to walk. It may seem incredible that a blind man could walk a distance of 200 miles over unknown roads as quickly as a gentleman could travel by coach with post-horses. The fact remains, however, that Metcalf, leaving London on a Monday morning, reached Harrogate in six days, two days before the Colonel. The latter, with his retinue of sixteen servants, had perforce, on account of the execrable state of the roads, to rest at Wetherby over the week-end.

When the close of the season at Harrogate brought the assemblies to an end, Metcalf usually stayed on for a few days. It was such an occasion as this, that, in the year 1739, saw the beginning of what may be said to have been the romance of his life. It must be remembered that he was a fine, big, strapping spirited young fellow, not bad looking, and, in addition, sympathy on account of his affliction was enough to awaken tender feelings in many girls' hearts. Be this as it may, he certainly attracted the notice of Miss Dorothy Benson, the daughter of a hotel-keeper. On the other hand, her thoughtful attention and invariable kindness first won his gratitude, and then inspired a sincere regard and a warm affection. Knowing, however, that her mother would oppose any idea of marriage on their part, they had perforce to employ various devices to conceal their tacit engagement and frequent meetings. But the course of true love, as so frequently happens, did not run smooth.

Metcalf had to leave the town on business for a time. During his absence a Mr. Dickinson had paid his addresses to Miss Benson, and now urged his suit, no doubt seconded by the young lady's mother, with such success that the banns were published, and the wedding-day appointed. This came to the knowledge of the blind man on his return. He had thought himself secure in Miss Dolly's affections, but though he loved her tenderly, his pride prevented him from manifesting his feelings or attempting to prevent her marriage with his rival if she were a willing party to the match.

On the day preceding that on which the marriage was arranged to take place, however, Metcalf, riding past the house, was accosted with, "One wants to speak with you." He immediately turned towards the house, and there, to his joy and surprise, he found the object of his affections, who had sent her mother's servant to call him. After some explanations, an elopement was resolved upon, which Metcalf, with the assistance of a friend, effected that night, and the next morning Miss Benson and our hero were duly married.

The confusion of his rival, who had provided an entertainment for two hundred people, may easily be imagined. Mrs. Benson was not unnaturally annoyed at her daughter's conduct, and refused either to

see her or to give up her belongings; nor was she reconciled to her until the birth of her second child, on which occasion she stood sponsor to it, and presented Metcalf with his wife's dower.

It was long a matter of comment that Dolly Benson, as handsome a woman as any in the country, should have preferred to marry a blind man. A lady having asked her why she refused so many good offers for that of "Blind Jack," she answered, "Because I could not be happy without him." And being more particularly questioned, she replied in the quaint diction of the period, "His actions are so singular, and his spirit so manly and enterprising, that I could not help liking him."

Metcalf now purchased an old house and had it rebuilt, he himself getting the necessary stones out of the bed of the river. While residing for the most part at Knaresborough, he continued to play at Harrogate in the season, and occasionally at Ripon. He also set up a four-wheeled chaise and a one-horse chair plying for public hire, the first vehicles of the kind in the district. He kept them going two summers, when the innkeepers began to run chaises, and he sold his conveyances. About this time, too, he also gave up racing and hunting.

Still in search of some less precarious and more regular means of earning a livelihood than music, he bought horses and went to the coast for fish, which he conveyed all the way to Leeds and Manchester. So indefatigable was he, that he frequently walked for two nights and a day with little or no rest. With his new responsibilities of wife and family, he was as keen in business as he had previously been on sport and pleasure.

In 1754 our hero initiated a new venture. He set up a stage-coach between York and Knaresborough, being the first on that road, and drove it himself--twice a week in the summer, and once in winter. This business, with the occasional conveyance of army baggage, employed his attention for several years.

For some time the Second Dragoons (The Queen's Bays) were quartered in Knaresborough and the neighbouring towns; but after a short stay, they were ordered to the north. The country people were reluctant to supply waggons for conveying the baggage, the King's allowance being only ninepence a mile per ton; that of the county, one shilling in the West Riding, and fifteenpence in the North Riding. Metcalf, having two waggons (one of them covered), decided to try this business; and to make sure of a journey, got the soldiers to press his two vehicles; these were promptly loaded, and he himself went with them to Durham. Previous to loading, however, the country people, who knew the advantage of carrying for the army, and who had kept back in hopes of an advance in the price, came forward with their waggons in opposition to Metcalf, but the soldiers would have no others. Arriving at Durham, he met Bland's Dragoons on their

march from the north to York. They loaded his waggon again for Northallerton, and would willingly have engaged them to York, but this he was obliged to decline, having promised to bring twenty-three woolpacks to Knaresborough. He was just six days in performing this journey, and cleared, with eight horses and the one he rode, no less a sum than twenty pounds.

Metcalf was equally at home on foot or in the saddle, in the camp or in the market-place. He lived in a time of transition. During Walpole's long administration, England had enjoyed a period of unexampled prosperity, disturbed only by the feverish speculation of the South Sea Bubble. The process of industrial and commercial expansion continued, despite the excursions and alarms of the two Jacobite Rebellions. The population was rapidly increasing, and sought new outlets for its energies. It was a time of awakening, of transition from the pastoral stage, and that of merely local trade and barter, to one of national, commercial, and industrial activity. The evolution of the stage-coach, and the demands of commercial transit alike, necessitated the construction of better roads, a demand which John Metcalf, blind as he was, was one of the first to perceive. Hitherto the making of roads had been carried out on very haphazard and rule-of-thumb methods. Metcalf was one of the chief predecessors of Telford and Macadam, and one of the pioneers in the adoption of uniform and scientific construction.

During his leisure hours, Metcalf studied mensuration in a way peculiar to himself. His numerous journeys had given him an unusual familiarity with the roads in the north of England. He knew how bad they were, and how the defects could be remedied. With characteristic confidence and enterprise he put his theories into practice, and afterwards became one of the most notable pioneers in that branch of engineering rendered famous by his labours and those of Macadam and Telford, namely, road-making and bridge-building.

In 1765 Parliament sanctioned the making of a new turnpike road between Boroughbridge and Harrogate. Metcalf tendered for the construction of that section of the road, between Minskip and Fearnby, a distance of three miles, and the chief surveyor, Mr. Ostler, who knew him very well, and had every confidence in his sagacity and ability, let him the contract. The materials for the whole were to be produced from one gravel-pit. He had a temporary wooden hut erected at the pit, took a dozen horses to the place, fixed racks and mangers, and hired a house for his men at Minskip. He often walked from Knaresborough in the morning, with four or five stones of meal on his back, and joined his men by six o'clock. He completed his section of the road well within contract time, and to the entire satisfaction of the surveyor and trustees. Soon after this he contracted for building a bridge at Boroughbridge, which also he completed with entire success.

Metcalf next contracted to make a mile and a half of the turnpike road between Knaresborough and Harrogate. Walking over part of the common across which the road was to be made, he told his workmen that it differed from the rest of the ground, and he told them to dig for stone or gravel. Sure enough, the men came across the stones of an old Roman causeway buried many feet deep, and from this Metcalf procured much valuable road-making material. At another place there was a bog directly in the way, and the surveyor thought it impossible to build the road across it. Our hero assured him that it could be done, and the surveyor told the blind man that if he made the road straight across, he would pay him as much as if it were taken in a detour round the bog. Metcalf set his men to work at once. Acting on his instructions, they laid huge quantities of furze and ling upon the soft, marshy ground, and upon this again layers of gravel. Then they proceeded with the construction of the road as usual, and with complete success. This ingenious device Metcalf employed more than once, notably on the Manchester-Huddersfield road; and it was afterwards adopted by George Stephenson in taking the railway across Chat Moss.

With characteristic energy Metcalf threw himself into his new business of road-making. Obstacles never discouraged him. He seemed to consider a difficulty simply as something to be surmounted. Merely to give a list of the roads he contracted for and successfully completed would be tedious. It will suffice to mention a few of the more important. He was responsible for making the roads between Chapeltown and Leeds; Wakefield and Dewsbury; Wakefield and Doncaster; between Wakefield, Huddersfield, and Saddleworth (the Manchester road); between Huddersfield and Halifax; between Knaresborough and Wetherby--all in Yorkshire. In Lancashire also Metcalf carried out extensive road-making contracts. Some of the principal were between Bury and Blackburn, with a branch to Accrington; between Bury and Haslingden, and between Haslingden and Accrington, with a branch to Blackburn. In addition he constructed some of the main cross-country highways in the hilly country between Lancashire and Yorkshire, such as those between Skipton, Colne, and Burnley, and also in Cheshire and Derbyshire--between Macclesfield and Chapel-en-leFrith, and Whaley Bridge and Buxton.

* Concerning Metcalf and his methods, Mr. Bew, a contemporary, wrote:

The blind projector of roads would reply to me, when I expressed myself surprised at the accuracy of his discriminations, that there was nothing surprising in the matter. 'You, sir,' says he, 'can have recourse to your eyesight whenever you want to examine anything, whereas I have only my memory to trust to.'

*"Observations on Blindness and on the Employment of the other Senses to supply the Loss of Sight," by Mr. Bew (Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, Vol. I, pp. 172 and 174). Read 17th April, 1782.

There is, however, one advantage that I possess; the readiness with which at pleasure you view any objects, prevents the necessity of fixing the idea of them deeply in your mind, and the impressions, in general, become quickly obliterated. On the contrary, the information I possess, being acquired with greater difficulty, is on that very account so firmly fixed on the memory as to be almost indelible.' . . . I made some inquiries respecting this new road he was now making from Wilmslow to Congleton. It was really astonishing to hear with what accuracy he described the course and nature of the different soils through which it was conducted. Having mentioned to him a boggy piece of ground it passed through, he observed that that was the only place he had doubts concerning, and that he was apprehensive they had, contrary to his directions, been too sparing of their materials.

With regard to Metcalf's own active personal share in the engineering of the roads, Mr. Bew wrote:

With the assistance only of a long staff, I have several times met this man traversing the road, ascending steep and rugged heights, exploring valleys, and investigating their several extents, forms, and situations, so as to answer his designs in the best manner. The plans which he makes, and the estimates he prepares, are done in a method peculiar to himself, and of which he cannot well convey the meaning to others. His abilities in this respect are, nevertheless, so great that he finds constant employment. Most of the roads over the Peak in Derbyshire have been altered by his direction, particularly those in the vicinity of Buxton; and he is at this time constructing a new one betwixt Wilmslow and Congleton, with a view to open a communication to the great London road without being obliged to pass over the mountains.

This extraordinary man not only constructed the roads which were planned for him by other surveyors, but, notwithstanding his affliction, himself personally surveyed and laid out many of the most important roads which he constructed in difficult and hilly parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire. His work was of the utmost importance in opening up communications and developing the resources of the two counties, long before the coming of the railway. Previously, the only means of communication was along horse-tracks and mill roads, which were fit only for pack-horses and not for vehicles. The total length of turnpike roads built, by Metcalf was about 180 miles, and, including many bridges and culverts, the total contract payments amounted to about 65,000. "Blind Jack" was upwards of seventy years of age before he left off road-making. He was even then hale and hearty, remarkably active, and still full of enterprise.

He had, however, undergone a great bereavement. While he was engaged in road-making in the district, he had brought his wife to Stockport. There she died at the age of sixty-one, after nearly

forty years of happy, married life, leaving four children. She was buried in Stockport churchyard, and a quaint epitaph was inscribed on her gravestone.

At Harrogate in Yorkshire I was Born, but now
my body lies under this stone to
you I've left behind, its sure to be your body
when in dust will lie the same as
me, take care in time to obtain a happy fate
and don't neglect for fear it may be too
late, all those who come these lines to see
prepair in time to follow me.

One of Metcalf's daughters married a cotton manufacturer in Stockport, and as that business was very brisk at the time, Blind Jack himself embarked on it in a small way. He began with spinning and the allied process of carding, and afterwards bought looms and started weaving. The venture was not a success, however, and he went back for a time to his road-making. The road between Haslingden and Accrington has a pathetic interest as being his last contract. He completed this in 1792, and lost money by it, wages having risen.

In the same year (1792) Metcalf retired to his farm at Spofforth, near Wetherby, in his native county. Here, in the intervals of farming, he used to buy hay to sell it again. He would measure the stack with his arms, and having ascertained the height, could readily tell what number of cubic yards were contained in a stack up to the value of hundreds of pounds. Sometimes he bought standing trees, and if given the height, would himself measure the girth and calculate the solid content.

Here, at Spofforth, he lived for many years with a married daughter, who kept house for him. He was happy in the enjoyment of the fruits of his industry, and consoled with the recollections of a full and a well-spent life, even when his advanced age prevented him from engaging in the more active occupations to which he had been accustomed. At last, bowed under the weight of advancing years, this big-hearted man laid down his staff for the last time. He died on the 26th April, 1810, at Follifoot, near his beloved Knaresborough, at the patriarchal age of ninety-three.

He was buried in Spofforth churchyard, and an inscription in verse forms his epitaph:

Here lies John Metcalf, one whose infant sight
Felt the dark pressure of an endless night;
Yet such the fervour of his dauntless mind,
His limbs full strength, his spirit unconfin'd,
That long ere yet life's bolder years began,
His sightless efforts mark'd the aspiring man;
Nor mark'd in vain--high deeds his manhood dar'd,

And commerce, travel, both his ardour shar'd;
'Twas his, a guide's unerring aid to lend,
O'er trackless wastes to bid new roads extend;
And when rebellion rear'd her giant size,
'Twas his to burn with patriot enterprise--
For parting wife and babes one pang to feel,
Then welcome danger for his country's weal.
Reader, like him, exert thy utmost talent given;
Reader, like him, adore the bounteous hand of heaven.

He left four children, twenty grandchildren, and no fewer than ninety great-grandchildren to cherish his memory.

It is said that Metcalf retained his shrewd mother wit, and the resolute spirit which were so characteristic of him throughout his long and active life, to the last. His life was one of the most striking examples of the overcoming of the disadvantages attendant on a serious physical affliction such as blindness, of which there is any record. He surmounted difficulties and accomplished tasks which would have paralysed the energies of most men possessed of all their faculties. He indeed rose superior to his lot. As the admirable Crichton of the blind, and the compeer of Telford and Macadam, he was unique. England was the poorer for his death, and may never again see his like.

INTRODUCTION

By C. Warren Bledsoe

Sir Francis Campbell will need no introduction to regular readers of BLINDNESS ANNUALS. His exploits were described in detail in the 1973 issue. However, it recently came to light that he had something more to contribute to knowledge about blindness when it was discovered that he had written the 1876 Encyclopedia article entitled BLIND.

This article is illustrative of his extraordinary qualities of leadership because he was asked to do it when he had been in Britain only five years and was still an American citizen, which he continued to be for the ensuing three decades.

However, his Encyclopedia article may be classified as one of his lesser achievements since he had taken up residence in the British Isles. By some form of charm which has never been completely explained he had beguiled the people who governed England to let him create the most modern up-to-date school for the blind in the world, known as the Royal Normal College for the Blind. In 1876 Queen Victoria's daughter, dedicating a new building on the premises, said it really ought to be called The Royal Abnormal College for the Blind. It is not of record that anyone thought at the time the College might also have been called Abroyal. Nevertheless, many anecdotes of the time indicate that Campbell developed a program which was a kind of American Revolution in the field of work for the blind. Moreover, he did it on British soil, and British capital paid for it.

His blueprint is reflected in his Encyclopedia article, sections of which are reprinted in this year's BLINDNESS ANNUAL.* As a companion piece to Mannix's JOHN METCALF it gives a contemporary view of what happened in the century after Great Britain lost the unsophisticated attitude toward blindness in which John Metcalf made his way. It is also a fitting milestone from which there is a viewpoint forward and backward exactly halfway through 200 years of history celebrated in our bicentennial year.

* Excerpts from the Article "Blind" by Sir Francis Campbell. The Encyclopedia Britannica - A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences and General Literature. 9th ed., Vol. III (Philadelphia: J. M. Stoddard & Co., 1876), 717-724.

BLIND

By Sir Francis Campbell

The blind, as a class, are limited to such narrow spheres of action that those unacquainted with the subject fail to realize how large a number of the human race are deprived of sight. In the temperate regions of the globe about 1 in every 1000 of the population is blind, but in less favorable climates the percentage is much greater. When we consider what medical skill has already

accomplished in Europe and America, not only for the relief but the positive prevention of blindness, we may readily conclude that in warmer and less civilized countries the class is more numerous and their condition more deplorable.

We rejoice that much can still be done by proper care and treatment to prevent blindness; for instance, ophthalmia of infants is a very common cause, and ought not to terminate in loss of sight, which in most cases results from neglect and dirt. Glaucoma is also a fruitful source of blindness, invariably causing loss of sight if left to itself; but, thanks to Professor Gräfe's brilliant discovery, these cases are generally curable if operated on early. Another very common cause of blindness is serious injury to one eye, which is thus lost, and if the injured organ be not at once removed, sympathetic inflammation and destruction of the other is very apt to follow, resulting in total blindness; whereas, if the injured eye be at once removed the other is generally preserved.

Loss of sight from small-pox is now comparatively rare, owing to the general practice of vaccination, but much undoubtedly may still be done towards diminishing the frequency of blindness by further advances in the art of treating eye-disease, and especially by spreading among all classes a knowledge of what has already been done in this direction.

It often occurs that children become blind through the most trivial causes by parents consulting unskilful practitioners. The improvement and increase in the number of well-regulated hospitals now makes it possible for every parent, however poor, to have the best medical advice and attendance.

In all ages of the world the blind have been the objects of pity and commiseration, yet it has only been within the past century that Christian civilization in its grand onward march has taken them in its embrace, and shed the influence of its light upon their midnight darkness. During recent years leading philanthropists have given much earnest thought to the best methods of ameliorating and improving the condition of the blind. Nearly all the European Governments and the States of the American Union have made liberal provision for their education and special training. In Great Britain the work has been left thus far to charitable enterprise. Much, however, has been done,--almost every large town having its asylum, workshop, or home teaching society.

The following summary, from A Guide to Institutions and Charities for the Blind, prepared by M. Turner and W. Harris in 1871, will show the state of these institutions at a recent date:--

"In the year 1800 there were only four institutions for the blind in the United Kingdom; during the next thirty years six others were added to the list; in the succeeding thirty years seventeen more were opened; while within the last ten years twenty new ones have been established, making a total now of fifty-three, without including societies for visiting the blind at their homes, and other charities.

Scotland with five institutions sold, in the last year of which we have any report, goods of the value of £21,930, while England with forty institutions only sold in the same period goods of the value of £33,598; and Ireland, only £454.

Scotland provides for, on an average, 76 blind in each institution; while England only provides for 43, and Ireland for 60.

The donations and subscriptions in Scotland for the same year amount to more than £20 per head of the number benefited; while in England they amount to about £21, and in Ireland to about £16.

So far as returns have reached us, it appears that Mr. Moon's system of reading for the blind is adopted by 38 institutions and home-teaching societies, while only 22 use the books of other systems-- Lucas's, 7; Roman, 4; Alston's, 4; Frere's, 3; Braille, 4. [Since 1871 the use of Braille has been introduced into many other institutions.]

Of the 30,000 blind in the United Kingdom, there are only about 2250 being instructed or assisted to work. The total amount received per annum for the benefit of the blind, according to the answers received, is about £66,000; besides, there are twelve societies from which no return has been made. Of institutions for the blind generally, we may remark that in each institution nearly the same difficulties appear to exist, the principal one being the difficulty of selling the goods manufactured at such prices as will secure a ready sale and cover the cost of production, and consequently in most instances there is a large surplus stock. In cases where the stock is wholly disposed of, our observations lead us to think that sales have been secured by selling at a loss.

The principal trades practised by the blind in the United Kingdom are the making of baskets, brushes, brooms, mattresses, rugs, mats, caning of chairs, with knitting and sewing for women."

Within a few years a great impetus has been given in England to the higher education of the blind, by the formation of the British and Foreign Blind Association the establishment of the College for the Blind Sons of Gentlemen at Worcester, and the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind, Upper Norwood.

British and Foreign Blind Association.--The first-mentioned association "has been formed for the purpose of promoting the education and employment of the blind, by ascertaining what has been done in these respects in this and other countries, by endeavoring to supply deficiencies where these are found to exist, and by attempting to bring about greater harmony of action between the different existing schools and institutions.

"The founders of the association took as an axiom that in all questions which relate to obtaining impressions by touch the blind

are the best judges; the council of the association therefore consists entirely of gentlemen who are either blind, or so nearly so that they have to use the finger instead of the eye for the purpose of reading.

"One main difficulty in the way of educating the young blind is the great cost of most of the appliances; this the council have endeavored to meet by the manufacture of cheaper and better apparatus than any hitherto in use. No one who has not made the attempt can have any idea of the extreme difficulty of combining great accuracy and durability with cheapness. This has been in a great measure accomplished as regards the Braille writing frames, which are now within the reach of every blind person who wishes to avail himself of the advantages of writing. The fact that a large number of these frames has been already sold speaks for itself, and, as the great majority of the purchasers are poor, the quick sale is evidence not only of the cheapness of the frames, but also of the widespread desire for self-education existing among the blind.

"Another obstacle to the diffusion of the knowledge of the Braille system has been the absence of printed books in English. With the view of meeting this want one of the council has perfected the process of stereotyping used in France, by which the cost of production of stereotype plates is greatly reduced; and as the blind can themselves produce these plates, a new and remunerative means of employment has been discovered. Some school books have already been issued by the association, and will shortly be followed by others. The work on the Education and Employment of the Blind, by the honorary secretary, has been published under the sanction and at the expense of the association."

Different Types for the Blind.--The following extract from an address delivered by the honorary secretary before the Society of Arts on the various types for the blind, shows how thoroughly they are investigating the subject:--

"The happy idea of printing on paper letters recognizable by the touch is due to M. Haüy of Paris, who printed his first book in 1784, and founded the Institut des Jeunes Aveugles, Paris. The type he adopted was the script, or Italic form of the Roman letter. This was introduced into England by the present Sir C. Lowther, who printed the gospel of St. Matthew in 1832 with type obtained from Paris, and followed it with other portions of the Bible. In 1834, Gall, of Edinburgh, printed the gospel of St. John in Roman capitals, in which, however, all curves were replaced by angular lines, and the lines themselves were serrated, which changes, he believed, gave greater distinctness to the letter.

Alston, of Glasgow, adopted Fry's plan of using ordinary Roman capitals. Dr. Howe, of Boston, U.S., makes use of the small Roman letters, giving them angularity according to Gall's idea.

The Philadelphia type does not differ much from Alston's. The combination of capitals with small letters has also been tried,

and a society has recently been formed at Worcester with the intention of printing on a large scale in this type. In Germany various modifications of the Roman letter exist, the principal of which, the so-called Stachelschrift of Stuttgart, consists of Roman capitals formed by finely dotted lines. All three modifications are suggestive of the strong tendency among those who have attempted to benefit the blind to retain for them the form of letter to which the seeing are accustomed, while the constant change of form indicates a fact with which most blind persons are familiar from personal experience, viz., that none of these modifications are satisfactory as to the primary condition of being easily felt. A better form than any which has obtained currency was suggested twenty years ago by Mr. Welch, a blind man, who has been the pioneer of education amongst the blind of London, and this is almost identical with one independently worked out by Mr. Littledale of Cheltenham.

The second great class is made up of alphabets deviating more or less widely from the Roman letter, and consists of a stenographic shorthand invented by Mr. Lucas, a phonetic shorthand due to Mr. Frere, and a full written system introduced by Mr. Moon, in which the Roman letter is retained in a more or less modified form whenever he considered this could be done compatibly with easy recognition, the simple line-signs employed by Mr. Frere being used to replace the more complicated of the Roman letters. It will be necessary to examine these systems in detail, and it will facilitate this examination if we compare them with each other in the following particulars: (a) As respects the shape of the letter; (b) As respects the advantage of conformity with the Roman letter; (c) As regards the reading from right to left and from left to right alternately; (d) Advantage of a shorthand as contrasted with a full written system.

(a) As respects the shape of the letter.--Mr. Lucas and Mr. Frere brought out their systems about the year 1838, Lucas preceding Frere by a few months. They employed at first almost identically the same characters, but unfortunately could not agree to represent the same sound by the same symbol. Mr. Frere had the advantage of having his plan carried out by a very ingenious and sensible blind man, who soon discovered that the letters formed by lines and curves upon which dots were placed were too similar to those formed by the corresponding lines and curves without dots; he, therefore, changed all his dotted characters, replacing the dotted curves by angles of 45°, and the dotted lines by lines in which a short line is substituted for the dot.

The result of this change is, that Frere's character is now far superior to Lucas's in the quality of easy recognition. Mr. Moon's character, in the large size which is used by him, is quite as easily distinguishable as Frere's, but in the form in which he now prints his characters, his right-angles are not true right-angles, but are rounded. In the size which he uses, this defect is of very little importance, but it effectually prevents any considerable diminution, because, if this is attempted, the rounded right-angles cannot be distinguished from the hooked lines.

The importance of using a character as small as is compatible with easy recognition may be readily understood from the following statement: The largest type used by Mr. Frere is that employed in the gospel of St. John. The character is $4\frac{1}{2}$ -sixteenths of an inch long, and is about the same size as Moon's character. The pages occupied by the gospel of St. John in Frere are 96. In his medium type, in which the length of the letter is 4-sixteenths of an inch, the same matter would go into 67 pages; and in his smallest type, in which the length of the letter is $3\frac{1}{2}$ -sixteenths, it would occupy 46 and a third pages. It has been found, by an experience extending over 27 years, and embracing many hundreds of individuals of all ages and conditions, that all those who can read the largest type can read the medium, and almost all can read the smallest.

The medium type is very generally preferred, as being more pleasant to the finger, and many with delicate touch prefer the smallest for the same reason. Thus it will be seen that, by selecting a well-devised character, not only can a very considerable saving be made in the size, and therefore in the cost of books, but by a diminution of size, and therefore in the cost of books, but by a diminution of size within certain limits, the character is rendered absolutely more legible. The gospel of St. John, in Moon's type, occupies 140 pages.

(b) As respects the advantage of conformity with the Roman letter.--Much has been said and written on this subject. A favorite argument with the advocate of the Roman letter is, that by its use a blind man can be assisted in his reading by those around him who are possessed of sight. This, no doubt, would be valid if no simpler character for the blind had been invented, but when we have to choose between a character in the reading of which the blind can be assisted by the seeing, and one which is so simple that no assistance is required, there can hardly be a doubt as to which ought to be used.

Another plea for the use of the Roman letter is, that by its means the blind can write in a character understood by everybody. This writing is, as we shall presently see, a very imperfect process; but this argument is undoubtedly of some weight. These remarks apply simply to the existing systems in which the Roman letter is employed. It is probable that a much more legible alphabet might be constructed, but, after our 96 years of experience and experiments with the Roman letter, another failure may well be feared. The small angularized Roman letter of Dr. Howe, of Boston, which is used in most of the schools of the United States, is probably as good a form as any, and if printed in a larger size would not be difficult to feel; in its present size, however, it is far too small, and has signally failed in America. The American schools are all State institutions, and have to furnish accounts to their respective State Legislatures of the work done by them.

Out of 664 pupils in seven schools, where the Roman character of Dr. Howe is used, one-third learn to read fluently, one-third by spelling, while none fail; and it must be borne in mind that those who

learn to read by this system also acquire an admirable method of writing. Moon's system retains those Roman letters which can be easily distinguished, and thus makes a transition between the systems in which the Roman character is used and those which employ purely arbitrary signs. For this reason, and from its great simplicity of construction, it is more easily learned than any other, and therefore is well suited to the great mass of the poor, who from want of intelligence or of application cannot learn one of the shorthand systems. Its great bulk, however, involving costliness of production and comparative slowness of reading, is a serious obstacle to its general use.

(c) Reading from left to right, and from right to left, alternately.--In Frere's system the lines are read from left to right, and from right to left, alternately, and are in a circle taking the finger from the end of the upper to the beginning of the lower line. The plan may be illustrated by imagining the letters to be fixed on the upper edge of a long string. Let it be supposed that this string is doubled backwards and forwards upon itself in such a way that the letters always occupy its upper edge. This will give a good idea of Frere's method of reversing the line; not only is the line reversed, but every letter in it is also reversed, so that the finger, when moving forwards, whether towards the right or towards the left, meets the characters in the same position, and is, in fact, never moving backwards, in the same manner that a person may walk to the end of a room, turn and walk back, yet is moving forwards in both directions. Moon, on the other hand, while borrowing the reversal of the line from Frere retains the letters in the returning line in the same position as the advancing, so that the finger in the return line meets the characters in the opposite direction from that in the advancing line; and to those accustomed to Frere's simpler method of reversal an unpleasant feeling is produced, exactly comparable to walking backwards.

The following example of both modes of reversal, in which Roman Capitals are used, will make this clear:--

Frere's Method

I WILL MAKE DARKNESS
MEHT EROFEB THGIL

Moon's Method

I WILL MAKE DARKNESS
MEHT EROFEB THGIL

No doubt habit will accustom a reader to either plan, and probably there is not much difference in the difficulty of either, but, as we shall see by-and-by, it is absolutely necessary for writing that the pupil should thoroughly understand that, whichever way he goes, he is moving forwards; it is, therefore, wise to accustom him in reading to a process which he will have to follow in writing. Opinions differ widely among the blind whether it is best to read forwards in one

direction and backwards in the other, or forward in both; it seems, however, among those who have had experience of the return line, that there can be no doubt of its great value, as by its use no time is lost by the reading finger having to return from the end of the upper to the beginning of the lower line, and the setting free of the left hand enables it to follow the right in reading, to take its place, or to rest.

(d) Shorthand.--By a shorthand system, reading is more rapid, and a nearer approach is made to the way in which the eye takes in a whole word at a glance, than in a full-written system. The books are also more manageable and less costly, but the stereographic method is distinctive of correct spelling, and in the phonetic method this is not even attempted; yet it is advisable, for many reasons, that the blind should be able to spell. The shorthand systems seem therefore to be of the same use to the blind as to the seeing--not being of universal application, but extremely useful to those who have to read much.

In all the systems which we have hitherto considered, the letters, whether Roman or arbitrary, are formed by raised lines. The method employed for writing them is as follows:--Small cubes of wood are used with projecting pin points, so placed as to assume the form of each letter. The paper to be written on being laid on a soft surface, the pin-point letters are pressed into it; each point carries some of the paper before it, forming a little prominence on the reverse side, and as the pin points are very close together, the series of little prominences formed by them feel to the fingers like serrated lines. This plan ought rather to be called printing than writing. It requires great practice, and is at the best very slow and imperfect; yet it has its uses, as by employing Roman capitals the blind can correspond with the seeing. The letters, however, are not sufficiently distinct, and communications from blind correspondents written in this manner, or with pencil, are less satisfactory, both to writer and reader, than if the letter had been written from dictation. Printing from the Roman letter (not embossed) can be effected by the blind, with considerable rapidity, by means of Hughes's typograph or Foucault's writing machine; but the blind writer cannot read what he has written, and the apparatus is so costly that it is not procurable by the poor.

[A new machine called "the type writer," has lately been invented in America. It is largely manufactured, and is coming into general use for the seeing. It is equally well adapted to the use of the blind, is very simple, and can be manipulated very rapidly. A skilful operator can write at least twice as fast as an expert penman. It is not only a valuable invention, but one superior to all others of the kind.]

Various plans exist to enable the blind to keep their lines when writing with a pencil or with a stile on carbonized paper, but such writing can only be used for correspondence with the seeing, and cannot, of course, be read by touch.

We come now to the third class of systems, viz., those in which the letters are formed by a combination of dots. These are:

1. The Braille system, universal in France, both for writing and printing, and very much used for both purposes in Switzerland, and employed as the written character in almost all countries, with the exception of the United Kingdom.

2. The Carton type, which was introduced into Belgium by the Abbé Carton.

3. Hughes's system consists of large and small dots, and lines placed in different positions. It never obtained much currency, and seems never to have attracted the attention which its ingenuity merited.

4. A modification of the French method has been lately proposed in New York, and seems to have much to recommend it.

To begin with the French method. This was invented in 1834 by M. Braille, a blind pupil of the Institut des jeunes Aveugles. It spread with great rapidity, and has, as we have before seen, become almost the universal written language of the blind. Its signs are purely arbitrary and consist of varying combinations of six dots placed in an oblong, of which the vertical side contains three and the horizontal two dots. For writing, a frame is used consisting of a grooved metal bed, containing ten grooves to the inch; over this is fitted a guide whose vertical diameter is $\frac{3}{10}$ inch, while the horizontal diameter is $\frac{2}{10}$. This perforated guide is fixed into a light wooden frame, like the frame of a slate, which is attached to the grooved metal bed by hinges. The paper is introduced between the frame and the grooved bed. The instrument for writing is a blunt awl, which carries a little cap of paper before it into the grooves of the bed, thereby producing a series of little pits on the side next to the writer. When taken out and turned over, little prominences are felt; but this reversal presents no practical difficulty as soon as the pupil has caught the idea that in reading and writing alike he has to go forwards. The brass guide has a double row of openings, which enables the writer to write two lines; when these are written, he shifts his guide downwards until two little pins, which project from the under surface at its ends, drop into corresponding holes of the frame, when the writer writes two more lines, and this operation is repeated until he arrives at the bottom of the page.

The first ten letters, from "a" to "j", are formed in the upper and middle grooves; the next ten, from "k" to "t", are formed by adding one lower dot behind to each letter of the first series; the third row from "u" to "z", is formed from the first by adding two lower dots to each letter; the fourth row, from "â" to "w", similarly, by adding one lower front dot.

The first ten letters, when preceded by the prefix for numbers, stand for the nine numbers and the cypher. The same signs, written

in the lower and middle grooves, instead of the upper and middle, serve for punctuation. The seven last letters of each series stand for the seven musical notes--the first series representing quavers, the second minims, the third semibreves, the fourth crotchets. Rests, accidentals, and every other sign used in music, can be readily and clearly expressed, without having recourse to the staff of five lines which forms the basis of ordinary musical notation, and which, though it has been reproduced for the blind, can only be considered as serving to give them an idea of the method employed by the seeing, and cannot, of course, be written. By means of this dotted system a blind man is able to keep memoranda or accounts, write his own music, emboss his own books from dictation, and carry on correspondence.

But this French system, though extremely useful, is not perfect. The letter is too small for ready recognition by the unskilful or hard-handed, and if this is sought to be remedied by increasing the size, the reading finger does not cover the whole of the letter, and has to proceed up and down, feeling out each letter, instead of following the even gliding motion essential to good reading. The modification proposed in New York remedies this defect, though this does not appear to have been the intention of its promoters. It proceeds on the principle that the letters occurring most frequently in the English language should be represented by the fewest number of dots, and that the letters should be so spaced that a letter composed of one dot should not, as is the case in the French system, occupy the same room as one with six dots. For this purpose the oblong, consisting of six dots, composing the root-form of the letter, is placed horizontally instead of vertically, the greatest vertical depth of any letter in two dots instead of three. From these two changes results a saving of about one-third in space; this involves a saving of about one-third in the price of printed books; writing is rendered more rapid; and as the size can now be increased, owing to the diminution of the vertical length of the letter, it can be made sufficient for the dulllest touch. Ten-word and part-word signs have been introduced, which effect a further saving of nearly one-third, while they do not interfere in the least degree with correct spelling. These advantages make it well worth while to consider whether the modification of the Braille system ought not to be adopted as the written system of all English-speaking blind; but before such a step is recommended, the question should be carefully considered in all its bearings on musical notation as well as on ordinary writing."

Worcester College.--Regarding the Worcester College for Blind Sons of Gentlemen, founded in 1866 by the Rev. R. H. Blair, the Report informs us that:

"It was opened with a view of giving to families of the better class an opportunity of educating their children in a systematic manner, with a due regard to home comforts, and with surroundings befitting their position.

The course of education projected by Mr. Blair was such as would convert the pupils into intelligent home companions, if no other object were desired. But a conviction based on personal knowledge, that the blind were capable of the highest competition with the seeing, lay at the root of this gentleman's endeavors. Self-helpfulness and usefulness in the ordinary affairs of life is therefore but one of the first results which reward the teaching of the blind; and it appears that blind men can be made reproductive also, not only in the particular instance, but in the bulk, and that the arts of teaching and lecturing, acting as deputations, translating, presiding over blind or other institutions, the law, and in the most favored cases the church, are fully within the capacity of the well-educated blind. A prejudice has hitherto existed against the employment of blind men, owing to their supposed incapacity, and certain other drawbacks resulting from neglect. Let this impression be removed, and there will be an increase in the number of positions open to them.

For an entrance into these walks of life, the training must be such as to enable its recipients to compete for university distinctions. The objections to this course, if they are entertained, will be removed by a little reflection on the nature and uses of a university; and the difficulties which in the idea of inexperienced persons a blind man has to overcome, are greatly diminished by being met and grappled with in early years, and are actually being materially lessened by the earnest efforts now made by blind instructors and investigators.

It is impossible to rule definitely at what age the school education of a child born blind should begin. Children vary as much in natural quickness as parents in the power of educating. A quick and resolute child will, through the clumsiness of nurses or the carelessness of a parent, early acquire tricks which it takes years to eradicate, and acquire habits and ways of thought and action which may have a profound effect on his after life. The sooner, therefore, a child can consistently with his health and other considerations be admitted to cheerful and active society, where his character can have free play and find sympathy, yet be quietly trained, the more easy will his education be afterwards. For those who have become blind from accident or disease, in childhood or towards the age of adolescence, one word of advice may be given. As soon as it is ascertained that the blindness is past remedy, the child should be sent to school, so that the habit of study may be remitted as little as possible. It is in the highest degree impolitic to allow the faculties to degenerate through several years' disuse, as is often done; and it is in reality kinder to a child or youth to send him away to pick up strength and consolation by the example of his cheerful and patient fellows, and to distract his grief by learning the instruments which he will ultimately need in his education, than to keep him in the indulgences of home, brooding over his misfortune, or buoyed up by a hope which will not be realized.

No claim to exclusiveness is asserted in the use of English types. There are useful works to be found in all; and when a pupil

arrives who has been educated in one or other form of type, he is never discouraged from its continued use. But as uniformity of class-books is desirable, and one system must be employed as a basis, the Roman form, in which are printed books suitable for higher education, is adopted for class purposes. Dr. Moon's type is read by some for recreation or private study, and the American Bible, which is the most portable yet printed, and is beautifully executed, is read by those whose dexterity, acquired by long practice, enables them to master this somewhat difficult, because small, type. After some years of practice the desire for smaller type seems to become a passion for those possessed of a quick and nimble touch.

Dr. Moon's type is large and easy, and comprises the Bible, Prayer Book, and a large number of religious and devotional works, together with numerous stories, biographies, and other works suitable for the young and aged. Dr. Moon has also several educational works of a very useful character; but his plan of action has not yet led him to enter largely into the production of higher literature."

Royal Normal College.--The Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind has for its object the affording of a thorough general and musical education to the youthful blind of both sexes who possess the requisite talent, so as to qualify them for self-maintenance. The Report of the institution states that:

"As without previous trial it would in many cases be difficult to determine whether an applicant for admission has sufficient capacity for the kind of education given at the college, candidates will first be received as probationers for a term of three months, or less. If, at the end of that period, they are found to possess adequate ability, they may become permanent pupils.

With a view to adapting the methods of instruction to pupils of different ages and capacities, the following classification has been adopted, viz:--(a) The elementary section, the instruction in which is designed especially for children from seven to nine years of age; (b) the intermediate, for pupils from nine to twelve years of age; (c) The junior, for pupils from twelve to fifteen years of age; (d) The senior, for pupils from fifteen to twenty-one years of age. Exceptional cases over twenty-one years of age can only be admitted by special vote of the committee.

The college embraces three distinct departments--(1) General education; (2) The science and practice of music; (3) Pianoforte tuning.

The department of general education embraces all the ordinary branches of a sound English education. Special care is bestowed on the intellectual training of the pupils; for experience has shown that in order to qualify the blind for self-support, it is essential to afford them a thorough general as well as musical education.

In the musical department both vocal and instrumental instruction is given, according to the improved methods which have been employed during late years with marked success in the leading institutions of France and America. This department embraces the culture of the voice, the study of the piano, organ, and other solo instruments, harmony, counterpoint, composition, the history of music, and the art of teaching.

In the department for training the pupils in the art of regulating and tuning pianos, pupils are instructed who have passed the age at which they might have become qualified for remunerative employment in other departments. Though a superficial knowledge of the art of tuning may be readily acquired by those deprived of sight, a prolonged course of careful training is necessary in order to enable them to become thoroughly successful.

Experience has shown that the blind can seldom fully support themselves merely by manual labor, and the great majority of those who have been trained to industrial trades continue to require charitable assistance during their whole life.

It is well known that many of the blind possess musical talent, yet only a small number in the United Kingdom have ever been qualified to earn their living by the profession of music.

Such was formerly the case in other countries, but during recent years great improvements in the general and musical education of the blind have been effected abroad, particularly in France and America, and large numbers of this class educated in the institutions of those countries have been enabled to maintain themselves fully by various pursuits, especially as skilled organists, teachers, pianists, and pianoforte tuners.

In view of the practical results of the improved education of the blind in other countries, the Normal College and Academy of Music was founded in order to afford similar advantages to the youthful blind of the United Kingdom.

The college was opened in March, 1872, under the direction of a committee, including members of the governing bodies of various metropolitan societies and institutions for the blind, with an experienced principal, and a staff of highly-trained teachers.

Upwards of seventy pupils from London and other large towns have been under instruction; a number have already left the college, and are now regularly employed as thoroughly competent pianoforte tuners."

As it will be impossible in this article to give any lengthened account of the institutions on the Continent and in America, we will briefly sketch the plan of working in a few of the most progressive.

The following extracts from addresses delivered at the first European Congress of Teachers of the Blind at Vienna in 1873, will best give an insight into the schools of Saxony:--

Saxony.--Herr Reiner, superintendent of the Preparatory School for the Blind at Hubertusberg, pointed out that, "even among the families which are not very poor, blind children often grow up without learning to wash or feed themselves, with hands hanging soft and helpless at their sides, and those become more incapable than the poorest, who are forced to exert themselves by the necessity of the case.

If they are not taught to help themselves at home, it is very difficult to teach them at school, and as the existing blind institutions cannot admit young children without injuring the education of the older ones, they ought to be taught in preparatory schools or Kindergärten separately, which should be established by the State.

In the preparatory school at Hubertusberg in Saxony, the first thing aimed at is the strengthening of the limbs, then to make the children use them properly, to make them help themselves instead of relying on others, to correct their bad habits and to improve their mental condition, arousing in their minds the love of God and of truth as well as conscience. All this must be done methodically, and each lesson must be given separately and repeatedly as well as most patiently.

The change wrought thus is wonderful, if the teachers are experienced. They must be encouraged to move about as directed, and the 'Fröbel play and exercises' will be found useful. Plaiting strips of leather, and other occupations which combine play with work, are carried on with advantage. A good manager of Kindergärten can do them great good, and gymnastics give them the power of controlling their limbs; but every exercise must be first taught singly.

Object lessons must be given by means of models, stuffed animals, birds, fish, etc., to bring out the powers of memory and reason. Simple hymns and ballads are practised.

Very little technical work can be taught, except making rush baskets, etc., as the children are all under ten. This school has been carried on for eleven years, and the benefits of teaching blind children so early are plainly seen by all who watch the progress which they make when removed to the blind Institution; they are fit for independent work at an age three years less than the average of those who do not go through it.

As the children pass through the institution more rapidly, there is also more room for those who become blind as adults."

Of the National Blind Institution at Dresden, Dr. Reinhard, the director, said--"It is organized so that the working school forms an essential part of it, and when children enter it, consideration is at once given, not only to their physical, religious, and intellectual

education, but also to their instruction in work. Whilst between the ages of six and eleven they remain in the preparatory school, and find inexhaustible occupation in Fröbel's system of play and exercise.

'Playwork' is given them as they become fit for it; for the feeling that they can make something useful rejoices the little workers and excites their activity; it is important that they should learn early to aim at real work. They learn to plait reed mats, which is an excellent means of strengthening the muscles of the arm and hand, and they also make little rush baskets.

The range of their work is extended when they are transferred to the higher class, which is usually during their eleventh year; and from that time till their confirmation, which is generally at the end of their fourteenth year, they have at least three hours' work every day in the shops.

The work of the girls is, unfortunately, much restricted, and it is doubtful whether their learning to make baskets and rope is without injury to their constitution. Besides, we must not lose sight of the evils arising from their working with male overseers and workmen.

Hence, girls learn in general only knitting, plaiting counterpanes, chair-caning, hair-working, and sewing--as much as is required for mending their linen.

Hair-work has already been adopted in another institution, and is the most profitable work for blind girls, as a clever one can earn 7 or 8 groschen (about 9d) a day by it, whilst the quickest knitter can scarcely make 2 groschen a day.

The boys learn either basket-making or rope-making; they learn in the rope factory various kinds of light work, and, when they have been confirmed, choose for themselves between these two trades, their muscles being strengthened by alternately being employed at both.

It is important to consider the grounds of fitness for these trades. Rope-making requires strength and health of body, for much of the work must be carried on in places exposed to the weather; and besides this it requires a great deal of dexterity which is not indispensable in basket-making. It is also of great importance that each should learn the trade in which he is most likely to succeed after leaving the institution; for the great object is that pupils should be fitted for independent work eventually.

All those who understand the subject are now convinced that the blind cannot be really helped by building asylums. If there were three times as many asylums as there were schools, there would not be room for all, and the inmates would never be satisfied with their condition. Even women prefer an independent life full of care to the sameness of an asylum, where one quarrelsome person often embitters the whole life of the institution.

If there is any possibility of establishing pupils of either sex without exposing them to the risk of losing their health, there can be no doubt that it is to be preferred to placing them in asylums.

The Dresden Blind Institution is managed on the principle that the pupils, on commencing independent work, require much assistance before they can support themselves by it, and that the institution must give the necessary help. The director of the institution makes known to the manufacturers that a blind worker is coming to settle near them, and induces some of the families around to take an interest in him, and recommends him for employment. He also inserts in the newspapers short notices describing his capacity for work, and his difficulty in finding customers, etc., and requesting people to employ him.

The outfit required for pupils on leaving the institution consists of tools and clothing, and materials must also be provided at first. The cost of these is partly defrayed by the fund established for the purpose, partly by the savings of the pupils, and partly, if necessary, by a grant from the parish.

It is indispensable that the blind worker should have some person near in whom he can fully confide, and from whom he can get advice and help in any time of temporary difficulty, whilst the manager of the institution can rely on his taking an interest in the worker, and seeing that he obeys the rules.

The purchase of raw material causes the greatest difficulty; the blind man has not the means of buying much at a time, and must, consequently, pay highly for it; therefore the institution helps him by buying it at wholesale prices and letting him have it at the same price in small quantities. The number of his applications for materials shows the managers whether the man is industrious.

More than 200 blind support themselves in Saxony by means of the aid afforded by the fund and their own exertions. The fund amounted, in 1873, to 85,000 dollars, subscribed in all parts of the country."

Paris.--Previous to the Franco-German War, Mr. Liebreich, a celebrated oculist and practical friend of the blind, by order of the empress of the French prepared a report in regard to the Institution Impériale des jeunes Aveugles of Paris, in which he says that the institution:--

"Is an establishment of the State, in which children of both sexes deprived of sight receive an intellectual, musical, and industrial training. Children are received at the age of 13 years. They remain in the institution 8 years, and are made professors, musicians, tuners of pianos, workmen and workwomen.

During the last ten years 110 male pupils have left the institution, concerning whom we have received satisfactory information. The workwomen, on the contrary, earn but very little; among 166 blind, 108

have received a very good education, which ensures to them an easy and independent living; 56 have received an elementary training, and have not been put entirely beyond the charge of public charity.

The annual expense for 200 pupils is very nearly 240,000 francs (of which 146,000 francs are given by the State), making an average of 1200 fr. (£48) per pupil,--the workman costing a little less, the artist a little more. This sum is not excessive for the education of a tuner, a professor, or an organist, but it certainly is for the education of a workman, who only receives an elementary training, and is not even qualified to earn his own living.

M. Gaudet, chief instructor of the institution, expresses disapproval of the simultaneous education of artists and workmen. He says, 'Realizing from the first the great difference which exists between the future of an organist or a piano tuner on one side, and of a blind workman on the other, the apprentices regard themselves as sacrificed; therefore they do all they can to become tuners, and thus often lose much time in fruitless efforts before they resign themselves to become workmen, and even then toil reluctantly. On quitting the establishment to follow their occupations, they are not habituated to assiduous toil; returning to their indigent families they regret the comfortable life of the institution, and finally become discouraged.

Tuners begin ordinarily to work with piano manufacturers, and earn easily 1500 francs per year. If a little later they succeed in obtaining a town connection, they have no difficulty in earning double that or more. Some have even succeeded in uniting manufacture with tuning. The organists, by obtaining places in churches and by giving music lessons, very soon earn a good livelihood.

In short, the tuners, organists, and teachers have, in spite of their infirmity, become independent men, exercising honorable and lucrative professions; some have married and reared families, others have come to the aid of their indigent relatives.

Very different is the lot of the blind workmen, who by toiling without relaxation many more hours than sighted workmen, barely succeed in gaining a part of what they need to support themselves. By perfecting as far as possible the industrial training of the institution, a greater number of the male pupils might be enabled to earn 300 or 400 francs, but none far exceed this sum. The workwomen seldom earn more than 100 or 150 francs per year."

America.--The institutions of America are not asylums, but in the truest sense of the word educational establishments, in which the blind, without regard to their future, receive a thorough education. The blind in the United States are socially far above those of any other country; large numbers of them become eminent scholars and musicians, and even their blind workmen enjoy a degree of comfort unknown in England or on the Continent.

The results achieved by the Perkins Institution at Boston, U.S., are particularly instructive. High-class musical training appears to have been commenced there about 13 years ago, previous to which time the results in this respect were far from being satisfactory. The report of 1867 states that music is now taught to all of both sexes whose natural abilities make it probable that, under proper instruction, they will succeed as organists, teachers of music, or piano tuners, and goes on to say--"The teaching of music and playing is now the largest single field open to the blind as a means of support, and it seems to be growing larger. People are becoming more disposed to employ them; and as they go forth from the school they have more and more ground of hope that they will find opportunities to earn their living in this way." The whole tone of mind among the musical pupils has been changed, for instead of looking forward to the future with fear and anxiety, they now feel a well-grounded confidence in themselves. It seems that in Boston, and in America generally, the blind are able to earn more as teachers of music than as tuners, which is exactly the reverse of the state of things existing in Paris, and may arise either from differences in the condition of the two countries, or from the training for teachers being more thorough at Boston than at Paris; but their experience is identical in one respect, which is, that the blind who have the requisite amount of talent are almost certain to make a good income out of music; but to attain this end they must aim high. It will not do to be equal to the average seeing teacher or tuner; they must be superior; and this involves a good musical notation with first-rate masters, instruments, and appliances, and above all, a determination on the part of managers and teachers to overcome all obstacles.

A few paragraphs from American reports will sufficiently illustrate the enlightened views held in that country in regard to the education of the blind.

"A school for the higher education of the blind should be specially adapted to the condition and wants of the persons to be trained. In it the course of study should be the same as in our best colleges. All instruction should be oral, and the apparatus and modes of illustration be addressed to the touch. It should be supplied with text-books, maps, diagrams, and the like, in raised characters. It should have large collections of models of various kinds, such as weights, measures, tools, machinery, and the like; mannikins and models showing the anatomy of plants and animals, as well as their outward form. It should have collections of shells, crystals, minerals, and the like; models and sections showing geological strata; philosophical apparatus adapted to the touch; in short, everything that can be represented by tangible forms.

It would amaze those who have not reflected upon it to know how much can be done in this way. Saunderson, the blind professor of mathematics in Cambridge, not only knew ordinary money well, but he was an expert numismatist, and could detect counterfeits in a collection of antique coins better than ordinary persons could do by the sight.

Such an institute should have able professors and teachers, with special aptness for adapting their lessons to the condition of their scholars. It should furnish special facilities for the study of languages, ancient and modern, of mathematics, of pedagogy, and especially of music. It should also be well provided with everything necessary in a good conservatory of music, and have funds for the payment of competent teachers.

It is evident that there are a large number of persons to whom such an institute would be a source of great happiness, and a means of preparation for great usefulness.

A little reflection will show what a great advantage generous culture would be to a blind man, even if he were to be only a musician. Let him be ever so accomplished in his immediate art, he is under great disadvantages as compared with his competitors who can see. But if he has generous culture in other branches of knowledge, he will have advantages which few of them possess, and of course he will be more nearly on a level with them, and more capable of earning a living and enjoying it. Human effort will in such a case be successful in counteracting the principal evil which flows from the infirmity of blindness."

BLINDNESS 1964-74/75

AUTHOR AND TITLE INDEX

AUTHOR INDEX

<u>Author</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
Abel, Georgia Lee	1967	105
Andrews, Francis	1972	1
Apple, Loyal E.	1974/75	48
Asenjo, J. Albert	1965	27
Baker, E. A.	1966	87
Ball, Martha J.	1964	107
Barnes, James J.	1969	143
Barnett, M. Robert	1964	143
Bauman, Mary K.	1965	75
	1971	165
	1972	177
Bird, Betty	1971	93
Blank, H. Robert	1968	41
Blasch, Donald	1971	9
Bledsoe, C. Warren	1964	99
(Also see Research to Study	1965	27
Blindness - U. S. Government	1966	201
Sponsored Grants 1964-1968)	1967	83
	1967	159
	1968	101
	1969	95
	1970	127
	1971	19
	1972	1
Bradley, Mary S.	1971	179
Bray, Robert S.	1965	93
	1966	163
	1968	31
Breslauer, Bruce E.	1971	95
Brinkley, Sterling B.	1970	101
Campbell, Marjorie	1966	87
Carnes, G. D.	1971	75
Carpenter, Pat	1974/75	54
Clunk, Joseph F.	1966	137
Cohen, Wilbur J.	1964	63
Colligan, John C.	1969	35
Committee on Standards for Ethics	1973	6
Craigie, Stanton C.	1971	135
Cross, H. E.	1974/75	29
Cylke, Frank Kurt	1973	1

Author Index - Continued.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
Davidoff, Joanne Malatesta	1971	173
Davis, Ferne E.	1970	19
DiMichael, Salvatore C.	1966	95
Doctor, Powrie V.	1970	19
Donahue, Wilma	1964	85
Draper, Tom	1971	95
Duane, Thomas D.	1967	35
Faye, Eleanor E.	1974/75	63
Fitzgerald, Kenneth	1965	27
Foulke, Emerson	1967	11
Freiburger, Howard	1966	155
Gallozzi, Charles	1972	111
Goodman, Lawrence	1967	89
Gruber, Kathern F.	1970	96
Hallenbeck, Charles E.	1970	115
Harrison, Edith Burrell	1974/75	17
Head, Daniel N.	1972	117
Hendrickson, Walter B.	1973	123
Hennessy, J. J.	1974/75	80
Heron, Ruth	1970	111
Hood, Clare M.	1974/75	59
Hoover, Richard E.	1964	99
	1968	55
Howe, Samuel Gridley	1965	163
Jose, Randall T.	1974/75	49
Kaarlela, Ruth	1971	9
Kendrick, Baynard	1970	79
Kinney, Richard	1969	89
	1971	1
Klein, Johann Wilhem	1971	232
Kohn, Joseph	1973	17
Kolb, W. Patton	1973	29
Kossick, Rodney J.	1970	25
Kupfer, Carl	1970	9
LaRocca, Joseph M.	1967	41
Lasky, Frank	1974/75	18
Lowenfeld, Berthold	1965	17
	1966	105
	1967	159
	1968	155
	1971	227
	1974/75	1

Author Index - Continued.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
MacFarland, Douglas C.	1964	85
Magers, George A.	1966	119
	1969	53
	1971	135
Magill, A. N.	1966	87
Malamazian, John D.	1970	59
Mallinson, George G.	1966	147
	1972	71
Mallinson, Jacqueline V.	1972	71
Massey, B. C.	1971	95
McCauley, W. Alfred	1969	13
McCavitt, Martin E.	1971	183
Morgan, Clayton	1969	1
	1971	121
Morrison, Elizabeth	1969	153
Mullen, Susan C.	1965	75
O'Neill, Paul C.	1968	1
	1972	95
Paton, David	1965	59
Paton, R. Townley	1968	87
Patz, Arnall	1969	25
	1973	25
Phillips, Beth	1974/75	71
Putnam, Peter	1974/75	9
Randolph, Jennings	1965	1
Rich, Robert E.	1971	95
Rives, Louis H. (Jr.)	1966	1
Riviere, Maya	1974/75	88
Rosemeyer, Martha J. (Ball)	1964	107
Runyan, Noel	1971	95
Rusalem, Herbert	1966	15
Ryan, Margaret	1965	131
Salmon, Christine F.	1968	27
Salmon, F. Cuthbert	1968	27
Salmon, Peter J.	1966	15
	1974/75	42
Selby, James	1971	95
Scholz, Roy O.	1970	13
Seward, Henry C.	1968	91
Smithdas, Robert J.	1971	1
Staffen, Edward S.	1968	31
Switzer, Mary E.	1967	21
(Also see Research to Study	1968	7
Blindness - U. S. Government	1970	1
Sponsored Grants 1964-1968		

Author Index - Continued.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
Turner, Judith	1971	183
Ward, Roy J.	1974/75	75
Waterhouse, Edward J.	1973	37
Welsh, Richard L.	1972	99
Werntz, George (Jr.)	1967	1
Whitstock, Robert H.	1968	79
Williams, Russell C.	1965	27
Wilson, John	1965	87
Wilson, Ronald	1968	19
Wonderling, Donald J.	1972	203
Woolsey, Theodore D.	1968	19
Yoder, Norman M.	1964	151

TITLE INDEX

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
Advice as to the Choice of a College or University by a Blind Student	1971	93
Allen, Edward E.: My Recollections after 60 years, of The Royal Normal College and the Academy of Music for the Blind; Impressions of Institutions for the Blind in Germany and Austria, 1910	1969	163
Aging and Blindness	1964	85
American Association of Workers for the Blind, 1895-1964	1964	151
. . . and the Blind Man on the Corner Who Sang the Beale Street Blues	1972	71
An Anthology of Readings about Blindness	1967	83
Architectural Barriers and the Blind	1968	27
The Arts - Another Aspect of Rehabilitation	1967	21
Aural Reading by Blind Persons	1968	31
Basic Legal Aspects of Planning for Deaf-Blind Persons	1974/75	18
Best of the Past for the Present: N. Y. State Institution for the Blind at Batavia, 9/6/1866; by Samuel Gridley Howe	1965	163
Diderot's Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those Who See	1966	201
Maurice de La Sizeranne: The Blind as Seen Through Blind Eyes	1967	159
Valentin Haüy: An Essay on the Education of the Blind	1968	159
Robert B. Irwin: Battle of the Dots - Embossed Print	1968	153
Edward E. Allen: The Royal Normal College and the Academy of Music for the Blind; in Germany and Austria, 1910	1969	187
Opinions of Great Critics of Work for the Blind - from Homer to Ten Broek	1970	127
Johann Wilhelm Klein: A Portrait Excerpts from Two of His Publications	1971	227

Title Index - Continued.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
One Hundredth Anniversary Papers Honoring the Anglo-American Parentage of the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind (1872-1972)	1973	46
Rehabilitation Codes	1974/75	89
The Blind in a Changing World	1965	87
Blinded Veterans Association - Creation of	1970	79
Book Review: The Meaning of Blindness: Attitudes toward Blindness and Blind People by Michael Monbeck	1973	123
The Canadian National Institute for the Blind - a Study in Achievement; Col. Eddie Baker: a Portrait	1966	87
The Canadian National Institute for the Blind - Optical Aids Program	1970	111
The Challenge of Diabetes as a Cause of Blindness in the 1970's	1973	25
Changes in the Causes of Blindness among Children and Youth and their Effects	1970	13
Chronicle of the American Association of Instructors of the Blind	1972	1
Clio's Blind Disciples: Parkman, Prescott and Thierry	1969	143
Cognitive and Psychosocial Aspects of Mobility Training	1972	99
Communication Aids for the Blind (Advanced): Recent Research	1970	115
Critics (Great) of Work for the Blind from Homer to Ten Broek	1970	127
The Deaf-Blind Person: A Review of the Literature	1966	15
Definition of Blindness - an Analysis of and an Approach toward a New One	1964	99
de la Sizeranne, Maurice: The Blind as Seen Through Blind Eyes	1967	159
Developing Services for Deaf-Blind Youth and Adults	1974/75	42
The Development of a Code of Ethics for Orientation and Mobility Specialists	1973	6
The Development of the Service Delivery System for Blind People	1973	17
Diabetic Blindness	1969	25
Diderot's Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those Who See	1966	201
Doctor's Office Goes Mobile	1972	95

Title Index - Continued.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
Education and (Re) Habilitation of the Blind: Improvement of Current Cooperative Practices - 1966	1966	95
Educational Aspects of Rubella Sensory Deprivation	1970	19
The Emotionally Disturbed and Mentally Ill Among Visually Handicapped Persons	1971	165
Evergreen--November 11, 1920	1974/75	17
Experiences at College: the Joys and Difficulties Encountered	1971	95
Why an Eye-Bank?	1968	87
Eye Institute - the Pros and Cons	1967	35
The Family of Residential Schools--With a Backward Glance at the Future	1971	19
The First Half Century in Canada	1968	1
Four Blind Lawmakers	1974/75	10
From Little Coconuts - Hawaii's Program for the Blind	1969	153
Genetic Counseling and Blinding Disorders	1974/75	29
The Guide Dog Program from 1915 in Germany and Switzerland to the U. S.	1970	79
Haury, Valentin - his Portrait	1967	159
Hines' First 15 Years	1970	59
A History of the Typewriter in the Education and Employment of Visually Handicapped Persons	1972	203
Howe, Samuel Gridley: Address at the Laying of the cornerstone for the N.Y. State Institution for the Blind (Batavia), Sept. 5, 1866; together with a brief biography, "Life to Make Men Free"	1965	163
Human Potential--An Unclaimed Universe	1971	121
International Research and Demonstration Grants: Special Foreign Currency Program of the Social and Rehabilitation Service, Dept. of H.E.W.	1971	183
Inter-Professional Communications Among Workers with the Blind	1969	13
Introductory Remarks: Panel on "Trends in the Development of Low Vision Services"	1974/75	48
Irwin, Robert B. - a Portrait; and Battle of the Dots - Embossed Print	1968	155
Israel - Projects there under a Vocational Rehabilitation Grant	1966	105

Title Index - Continued.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
Legislation (Federal) for the Blind - the Historical Story of a Law	1966	1
Library Services for the Blind	1965	93
A Living Philosophy - Its Significance to the Agency Serving Blind Persons	1967	1
A Long Journey - An Account of the Royal National Institute for the Blind, 1868-1968	1969	35
Low Vision Aids: The Implications of Education	1974/75	54
A Low Vision Program--A Multi-Service Commitment	1974/75	75
Mobility in Perspective (See also 1968, p. 55; 1969, p. 95; 1970, p. 59)	1964	107
Multiply-Handicapped Blind - a Treatment Program for Young Adults	1967	89
National Development	1974/75	71
The National Eye Institute (Est. 12/26/ 1968) - a Status Report	1970	9
Optometry and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program	1970	101
Orientation and Mobility Fans Out	1971	9
Patterns and Preludes in Work with the Visually Problemmed in Four South American Countries	1969	89
Performance Tests of Intelligence for the Adult Blind: A Comparison of Three Measures	1965	75
The Perkins Brailier: A Brief History	1973	37
The Personality of Counselling	1969	1
Placement - Key to Employment	1966	119
Planning a Future of Improved Library Services	1973	1
Poetry	1971	1
The Power of Negative Thinking in Public Relations	1968	79
A Pragmatic Approach to the Orientation and Mobility Needs of a Low Vision Client	1974/75	80
Procedures for the Activation of an Orientation and Mobility Program	1972	117
Prosthesis for the Blind - One Billion Dollars in Ten Years?	1966	147
The Psychiatrist in Improved Services for the Blind, a View from a 21-Year Perspective Editorial: Background Story	1968	41
	1968	40A

Title Index - Continued.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
Psychological Testing and Blindness--A Retrospect	1972	177
The Randolph-Sheppard Act: Its Story	1965	1
Randolph-Sheppard Act - its Influences on the Employment of Blind Persons	1966	137
The Rehabilitation Center Movement in the U.S.A.	1965	27
Rehabilitation Counseling with the Blind: Practice and Theory	1971	75
Rehabilitation Programs to Train Personnel for Work with the Blind	1965	131
Research to Study Blindness - U. S. Government Sponsored Grants	1964	1
	1965	111
	1966	169
	1967	127
	1968	123
	1969	161
	1970	157
	1971	205
	1972	129
	1973	82
Royal National Institute for the Blind (An Account of), 1868-1968	1969	35
Sensory Aids for the Blind - Research in	1966	155
The Server and the Served; Dynamics, Attitudes and Rights	1973	29
The Ambrose M. Shotwell Awardees, 1939-1967, Faithful People	1968	101
The Social and Rehabilitation Service - Its Philosophy and Function	1968	7
Social Welfare in Transition	1964	63
Some Effects of Changes in Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped	1972	111
South Vietnam - Activating a Program for the Blind	1970	25
Speech (Time Compressed Recorded) and Faster	1967	11
State Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped	1969	53
Statistics on Visual Impairment - the Use of Sample Surveys	1968	19
The Story of Financial Aid to the Blind in America	1971	135
Switzer, Mary E.: An Interview	1970	1
Teacher Training - Whence and Whither Bound?	1967	105

Title Index - Continued.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Page</u>
Training of the Low Vision Assistant in a Comprehensive Low Vision Service	1974/75	59
Treatment of Blindness and the Progress Being Made	1965	59
Trends in the Development of Low Vision Service - Implications for Rehabilitation	1974/75	63
The Valley Forge Story	1968	55
From Valley Forge to Hines: Truth Old Enough to Tell	1969	95
Vocational Rehabilitation Administration (H.E.W.) - its International Program	1967	41
Volunteer Transcribers--Their Role and Their Contribution	1971	179
What is Blindness?	1974/75	1
What is Low Vision Service?	1974/75	49
Working with Retarded Blind Persons-- "A Happy Experience"	1971	173

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154

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